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New York

President:	Mr. Nebenzia/Mr. Kuzmin	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Li Yongsheng
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mrs. Mele Colifa
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Temenov
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Mr. Radomski
	Sweden	Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mrs. Dickson
	United States of America	Mr. Simonoff

Agenda

International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

Letter dated 13 April 2018 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/347)

Letter dated 17 May 2018 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/471)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

Letter dated 13 April 2018 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/347)

Letter dated 17 May 2018 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/471)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Serbia and Croatia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome Her Excellency Ms. Nela Kuburović, Minister of Justice of Serbia.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Judge Theodor Meron, President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and Mr. Serge Brammertz, Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to documents S/2018/347, which contains the text of letter dated 13 April 2018 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council, and document S/2018/471, which contains the text of a letter dated 17 May 2018 from the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Judge Meron.

Judge Meron: It is a privilege to appear once again before the Security Council to provide a briefing on the progress of the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals over the past six months, and a great pleasure to do so under the presidency of the Russian Federation.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the considerable attention and efforts devoted to the Mechanism by the members of the Council's Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, in particular in the context of the recent review of the Mechanism's progress in completing its mandate. I am grateful to the members of the Working Group for their sustained support. I wish to express my gratitude to the delegation of Peru for its adept leadership of the Group.

The Office of Legal Affairs continued to provide vital assistance to the Mechanism during the reporting period. I would like to convey my deep appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, and to the Assistant Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, Mr. Stephen Mathias, and their colleagues for their important contributions to our work.

The Mechanism has undergone a number of key changes since I appeared before the Council in December of last year (see S/PV.8120). Upon the historic closure of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), at the end of 2017, for the first time since its founding, the Mechanism has begun to stand on its own without the support of its two predecessor tribunals and has taken on the full ambit of the residual functions entrusted to it. For the first time, the Mechanism also assumed full responsibility for a wide array of administrative services essential to the conduct of its mandate. It also continued to carry out a retrial and to conduct a wide range of other proceedings, both inside and outside the courtroom, during a period of heightened judicial activity.

Significantly, the Mechanism has done all of that while facing unprecedented and unexpected challenges with regard to resource constraints and as a result of the rapid implementation of expenditure reductions, the deployment of staff-downsizing measures and the deterioration in staff morale.

The reporting period was therefore an arduous one for the Mechanism in many respects. Yet it also saw the Mechanism and its remarkable staff show resilience and creativity, including addressing new operational risks with resourcefulness and ingenuity and continuing to seek novel ways to enhance the conduct of the

Mechanism's mandate. In that context, I wish to express my particular gratitude to Registrar of the Mechanism, Mr. Olufemi Elias, and his team for their perseverance in the handling of the Mechanism's unprecedented budget situation and its myriad implications for the institution.

I would like to acknowledge my fellow judges for their work leading to another significant development — the adoption in April of a revision to the Code of Professional Conduct for the Judges of the Mechanism, which introduces a new procedure by which judges made themselves accountable for adhering to the principles set forth in the Code. That important advancement once again demonstrates the Mechanism's commitment to best practice and to serving as a model for accountability in all areas. That is but one example of an important milestone reached during the reporting period. I will keep my remaining remarks brief and touch upon only a few of the matters discussed more extensively in my written report submitted on 17 May (see S/2018/471).

The Mechanism continued to make important strides during the reporting period in the conduct and completion of its judicial work. The appeal hearing in the case *Prosecutor v. Vojislav Šešelj* was conducted on 13 December 2017, with the judgement delivered on 11 April 2018. An appeal hearing in the case *Prosecutor v. Radovan Karadžić* was conducted on 23 and 24 April, ahead of the projections made last November. The aim is to complete the case in December, considerably earlier that previously predicted.

In the meantime, the retrial of the case *Prosecutor v. Jovica Stanišić and Franko Simatović* is proceeding apace, with the prosecution's presentation of its case ongoing. Appeal proceedings are under way in the case *Prosecutor v. Ratko Mladić*, with both the prosecution and Mr. Mladić having filed notices of appeal and briefings in progress. Review proceedings in the case *Prosecutor v. Augustin Ngirabatware* are likewise continuing, following the withdrawal and replacement of his counsel. A hearing in that case, originally scheduled for February, is now expected to be conducted in the latter half of this year.

A host of additional ad hoc judicial matters are also pending before the Mechanism, involving everything from motions concerning allegations of contempt of court to applications to vary the protective measures granted to vulnerable witnesses. As indicated in my written report, the filing of such ad hoc judicial requests before the Mechanism can be expected to continue for some time to come.

Good progress is being to made on a number of other fronts as well. With regard to the enforcement of sentences, for instance, during the reporting period the Mechanism transferred eight convicted persons from the United Nations detention facility in Arusha to enforcement States, including four individuals to Senegal and four to Benin. The Mechanism is continuing in its efforts to address enforcement needs for the remaining convicted persons at both branches. It is our aim, subject to the cooperation of States, to complete the transfer of all finally convicted persons currently held at either the United Nations detention facility in Arusha or the United Nations detention unit in The Hague before the end of this year. If this is achieved, it will represent a major step forward towards the completion of our mandate in this area. The Mechanism expresses its appreciation to Member States currently enforcing sentences or considering doing so for their vital support.

Important milestones were reached during the current reporting period in the area of archives management as well, with the handover of the final and substantial tranche of physical and digital records from the ICTY to the Mechanism and the relocation of the physical records of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda into the custom-built archives facility in Arusha. The Mechanism has continued its efforts aimed at increasing and enhancing the accessibility of records in its custody throughout the reporting period, including by expanding the availability of judicial records on publicly searchable databases and providing technical support and advice to important external projects, such as the new Sarajevo information centre on the ICTY, launched just days ago.

Subject to resource constraints, the Mechanism looks forward to providing support for initiatives to further develop such information and documentation centres in the former Yugoslavia in the months to come, in keeping with the Security Council's guidance in resolution 1966 (2010), and to the continued exploration of ways in which the Mechanism's cooperation with the Government of Rwanda can be enhanced, in line with resolution 2256 (2015). In the meantime, the Mechanism continues to carry out other key residual functions entrusted to it, from the provision of assistance in support of accountability efforts in national jurisdictions to the ongoing monitoring of cases referred to national courts

to the delivery of essential witness-protection services. In doing all of this, the Mechanism strives to adhere to the highest standards and to seek out ever-greater efficiencies by deploying innovation and creativity at every turn.

In this context, I wish to underscore the Mechanism's appreciation of the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), which, in addition to its regular audits of specific aspects of the Mechanism's operations, completed a broader evaluation of the Mechanism's implementation of its mandate during the 2016-2017 period. We welcome all confirmations by OIOS of the Mechanism's achievements in everything from ensuring trial readiness to increasing cost-efficiency and streamlining workflows in key areas. But we are also just as grateful for the feedback and recommendations from OIOS on ways in which the Mechanism can improve its methods and work, such as by enhancing cross-branch coordination to strengthen the Mechanism's one-institution approach, restructuring the provision of administrative services to better address the needs at both branches and deploying human-resource tools to monitory gender parity.

If international justice and the fight to create a global culture of accountability are to succeed in the long run, it will be possible only if we remain open to such improvement, innovation and creative problem-solving, whether it is my colleagues and I at the Mechanism or, as suggested by the valuable open debate conducted recently in this Chamber under the Polish presidency (see S/PV.8264), the members of the Council themselves. It will be possible only if we continue to work together, maintaining an unerring focus on the core principles underlying not just the Mechanism's establishment, but the work of the United Nations more generally for this ongoing commitment and for this sustained and sustaining support that the members of the Security Council continue to provide to the Mechanism, and to broader efforts aimed at ensuring principled accountability for serious violations of international law.

The President: I thank President Meron for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Brammertz.

Mr. Brammertz: I thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to once again address the Security Council on the activities of the Office of the Prosecutor. My written report provides details about our activities and results during the reporting period in relation to our usual three priorities (S/2018/471, annex II).

With regard to the branch in The Hague, we worked to expeditiously complete our last judicial activities, with only three cases now remaining. With regard to the branch in Arusha, my Office undertook intense efforts to locate and arrest the remaining eight fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). And at both branches, we continued to provide full support to national authorities in relation to the prosecution of serious international crimes committed in Rwanda and in the former Yugoslavia.

As part of the review of the work of the Mechanism, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) evaluated my Office's work and methods. OIOS concluded that my Office operated with a small staff and tight resources as the Security Council had mandated. It noted that we were effective in planning, restructuring and refining our operational methods. It also identified a number of cost efficiencies that we successfully implemented, including our one-Office policy. At the same, OIOS identified that the high workload, together with organizational downsizing, had an impact on staff morale, particularly at the branch in The Hague. My Office will work to address that issue.

The review process established by the Council is an important exercise. My Office is also very grateful to all participants for their time, attention and constructive engagement. Our common goal is achieving our mandate through efficient and effective management. As a temporary institution, my Office regularly develops projections for the completion of our functions. Looking forward, I would like to briefly outline anticipated developments for the next few years.

At The Hague branch, we will continue finalizing our judicial activities. My Office will progressively reduce our staff and resources as these last cases are completed. With the appeal judgement in the *Šešelj* case issued two months ago, and the scheduled completion of the *Karadžić* appeal before the end of the year, there will only be two remaining cases. The President has reported that the *Stanišić and Simatović* trial and the *Mladić* appeal are expected to be completed by the end of 2020. That would then only leave appeal proceedings, if any, in the *Stanišić and Simatović* case.

Accordingly, we will be increasingly focused in The Hague on our remaining continuous functions, the most significant of which will be responding to

requests for assistance from national jurisdictions in relation to our quite extensive evidence collection. As set out in our review report, we anticipate that the number and complexity of requests for assistance will further increase in the coming few years. Countries of the former Yugoslavia have indeed established national war crimes strategies to intensify prosecutions, and have requested our support. We also anticipate that more cases will move forward once challenges in regional judicial cooperation are overcome. Sufficient staff and resources will still be needed temporarily for my Office to address this workload.

At the same time that judicial activities are winding down in The Hague, my Office anticipates that an increase in judicial activities at the Arusha branch will take place. In fact, that process has already begun. That expectation is informed by three main factors.

First, as we outlined in our progress report, at the Arusha branch there has been an increase in review and related litigation initiated by the defence. We expect that there will continue to be a greater workload in that regard than during the first four years of the Mechanism's operations.

Secondly, as I have previously reported to the Council, my Office is significantly increasing our efforts to locate and arrest the remaining eight fugitives indicted by the ICTR and ensure those cases are ready for trial. We restructured our tracking team, and adopted a more proactive approach to our work. Those reforms have been matched by a temporary increase in resources on the clear understanding that we have a limited amount of time to demonstrate a successful track record.

While the challenges in tracking fugitives are too significant to guarantee a positive outcome, my Office can confirm that we will spare no effort. The victims of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda deserve nothing less. In that regard, I call upon all States to provide full cooperation to my Office. This is an opportunity, not only an obligation. By successfully arresting a fugitive in coordination with my Office, States can clearly demonstrate their commitment to multilateralism and the rule of law.

Finally, my Office anticipates that over the next few years, there will be an increase in the volume of requests for assistance in relation to our ICTR evidence collection. My Office is strengthening our cooperation with Rwandan authorities, in particular with the Prosecutor General's Office. We are also initiating a project to improve access to our evidence. My Office is committed to managing all developments consistent with the Council's mandate for a lean and cost-effective organization.

The final topic I would like to address today is the search for missing persons in the former Yugoslavia. Over the past six months, many stakeholders have taken the initiative to raise that issue with my Office and seek our assistance, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Presidents of Croatia and Serbia and missing persons authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Efforts are urgently needed to strengthen the search for missing persons. There are 10,000 families — from all sides of the conflict — that still do not know the fate of their loved ones. The ICRC is launching a five-year strategy to further support local mechanisms, which are also improving their methods and cooperation. My Office is committed to providing all possible assistance as requested.

Yet Governments have made many commitments to support that work that remain only on paper. Long-standing recommendations have still not yet been implemented years later. Financial support from national budgets is limited and insufficient. Political will is also needed to create the conditions for witnesses to come forward with information. Glorifying war criminals surely has the opposite effect. The search for missing persons is a humanitarian imperative. It is time for political authorities to be held accountable for their commitments, and to show the courage to put aside all other considerations.

My Office is firmly focused on carrying out our remaining responsibilities efficiently and effectively. We also remain committed to providing our full support to national prosecutors and missing persons authorities in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Brammertz for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Judge Theodor Meron, President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and Mr. Serge Brammertz, Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal

Tribunals, for their briefings. I would also like to convey my gratitude for the twelfth report that has been submitted under resolution 1966 (2010) (see S/2018/471).

Peru, which is committed to multilateralism and international law, is honoured to preside over the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals. We took that Office in succession to Uruguay and its representative, Ambassador Elbio Rosselli. It should be recalled that the Informal Working Group deals with issues related to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, as the repository of the functions of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), and that the Mechanism is currently in the process of being reviewed and renewed, in accordance with the need to ensure accountability and prevent impunity.

Peru believes that the development of international criminal law, a process to which the Council has contributed, is vital to ensuring that justice is served, promoting reconciliation, deterring potential perpetrators from committing atrocity crimes and, ultimately, promoting sustainable peace. In that regard, we also believe that the Security Council, which is responsible for maintaining international peace and security, should stand united in its support for the Residual Mechanism.

We would like to commend the transparent, expeditious, efficient and effective way in which the Mechanism has carried out its mandates and the trials with which it is currently seized. That is particularly important given the closure of the ICTY last December.

We underscore the steps taken to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (S/2018/206), and take note of the amendments made to the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, which call for balancing the different approaches of the Romano-Germanic and the Anglo-Saxon legal systems. Moreover, we wish to welcome the willingness of several African and European Governments to allow convicted persons to serve their sentences in their respective countries, and underscore the need to bring the remaining fugitives to justice.

We stress, in that regard, that the success of the Mechanism depends to a large extent on the cooperation of States in complying with the judgements, abiding by the orders and responding to the Mechanism's requests for assistance. We also note the concern raised about the early release of persons convicted by the Special Tribunal for Rwanda, some of whom have expressed no regrets about their crimes. In that regard, we encourage the Mechanism to assess options within the framework of relevant procedures to address that concern.

I conclude by reiterating Peru's commitment to the promotion of justice, the rule of law and accountability, as well as to the work of the Council's Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, and by thanking the Office of Legal Affairs and the Security Council secretariat for their continued support.

Mrs. Dickson (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Judge Theodor Meron, and the Prosecutor, Mr. Serge Brammertz, for their briefings to the Council today and their recent reports (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471).

The Residual Mechanism has now entered an important phase of its mandate. With the closure of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and, at the end of last year, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), it is now the Mechanism's sole responsibility to continue the work of those Tribunals. Over the past decades, both Tribunals shone a spotlight on some of the worst atrocities witnessed in modern times. They showed that there would be no impunity for those who have perpetrated the most egregious of crimes. Resolution 1966 (2010), which established the Mechanism, provides it with the mandate it needs to ensure that the legacy of the ICTY and ICTR is carried on. As members of the Security Council, we need to continue to support the Mechanism in its important work.

We note the Mechanism's current case-load, which reflects the significance of the work that lies ahead — important appeals in the *Karadžić* and *Mladić* cases, the retrial of Stanišić and Simatović, the contempt of court hearing and the review of an appeal sentence in the *Ngirabatware* case. We are pleased to note that the Appeals Chamber delivered its judgement in the case of *Šešelj* in April. The Tribunal had already set out a time frame within which to hear those cases, and it is noteworthy that cases are proceeding at pace, and even ahead of their original schedule, such as the case of *Karadžić*.

We commend the Mechanism's efforts in establishing itself as a lean and efficient tribunal. The

recent Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) report has underlined that point, specifying that the Mechanism has already achieved much of what the Security Council envisaged in resolution 1966 (2010). Its strategic approach to handling cases has undeniably played a crucial role in achieving that goal. The structure of the Mechanism has enabled it to manage its case-load efficiently by employing, in addition to its full-time President, a roster of independent judges who perform judicial functions only when tasked to do so. They can also work remotely, in addition to working at one of the seats of the Mechanism, potentially saving time and resources. It has proved to be a successful way of working. Presidential oversight in ensuring the expeditious nature of trials has resulted in substantially reduced costs for the judicial activities of the Residual Mechanism when compared to those of its predecessors.

Let me turn to the valuable work being carried out by both the Prosecutor and the Registrar.

With regard to the Prosecutor's recent initiatives, we take note of the OIOS comments that the Prosecutor was effective in planning, restructuring and refining his Office's operational methods in response to the need for a lean and cost-effective organization. It is clear that embracing the one-office policy over recent years and redefining his Office's policy on tracking fugitives last year enabled it to be innovative in its operations in the post-ICTY and ICTR periods. Those innovations are to be applauded, but the support of the international community is still needed. We call upon Member States to assist the Prosecutor's Office in fulfilling its mandate.

For example, locating and apprehending fugitives is not a task that lies exclusively with the Prosecutor. We therefore urge States and international organizations to work constructively with the Office to bolster its efforts. Similarly, we call upon relevant States to engage with the Prosecutor in pursuing national prosecutions. The increasing number of requests that the Prosecutor is receiving from national judicial authorities for advice and support is encouraging, and we are pleased that such work will be done consistent with the lean and effective organization mandate. At the same time, it is an indication of the level of work that the Prosecutor will have to undertake over the next few years.

The work of the Registry often goes unnoticed, yet it is important that we note the changes made in the Registry, which have encouraged a unified work culture. Better coordination between the two branches has ensured harmonization of governance frameworks, leading to the sharing of best practices. In the future, we look forward to hearing from the Registry on further progress, including on the new archives repository and the work being done to create a unified information technology system for The Hague and Arusha, ensuring easier public access to information, as well as the steps being taken to increase responsiveness to changes in the Mechanism's workload going forward.

We are pleased that the Mechanism has welcomed the OIOS recommendations and has started work on their implementation. We are confident it will continue to carry out appropriately the Residual functions with which it is tasked, and the United Kingdom remains fully committed to supporting the Mechanism until it completes its mandate.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation extends its warm congratulations to your country, Mr. President, on its assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of June, and assures you of its full cooperation in fulfilling your mission. We also congratulate Poland, in particular Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, on the outstanding conduct of our work during the month of May.

Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the convening of this debate on the progress of the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and thanks Judge Theodor Meron and Mr. Serge Brammertz, in their respective capacities as President and Prosecutor of the Mechanism, for their briefings. Our congratulations also go to Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra on his work as Chairman of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals.

On 17 May, the Council held an open debate on upholding international law within the context of the maintenance of international peace and security (see S/PV.8262). On that occasion, almost all delegations stressed the need for States to pool their efforts to fight impunity in cases of violations of international law. The letters of the President and the Prosecutor of the Mechanism (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471) are in line with that perspective.

The Mechanism — a small, temporary entity — has made significant progress in implementing its mandate in recent years. Indeed, the Mechanism has fulfilled its mandate, in accordance with resolution 1966 (2010), by ensuring the necessary continuity of the residual

functions transferred to it by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, as evidenced by the increasing volume of its judicial activities, enforcement of sentences, the protection of victims and witnesses, and archives management.

My delegation commends the remarkable progress made by the Mechanism, as noted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in the report it published in March. Those include matching the budget to the size and activities of the Mechanism, as well as staff reductions. We encourage the President and the Prosecutor to pursue their efforts to achieve the objectives set by the United Nations in resolution 1966 (2010). Côte d'Ivoire also reaffirms the importance of the recommendations made by the OIOS in its review of the Mechanism's working methods and welcomes the steps taken to implement them. In that regard, my delegation supports the staff morale survey, the review of the survey results and the development of strategies on managing institutional change.

Despite the progress made, we note that many major challenges remain, including the cooperation of States with the Mechanism and the strengthening of national judicial capacities. With respect to States' cooperation with the Mechanism, my country is of the view that it is key in the search for, arrest and transfer of fugitives and the enforcement of sentences imposed. In that regard, my delegation appreciates the initiatives taken by the States that support the Mechanism by receiving persons who have been convicted, acquitted or have served their sentences when they renounce their return to their countries of origin. We also encourage States to redouble their efforts to apprehend fugitives and make them available to the Mechanism for trial.

With regard to strengthening the judicial capacities of national institutions, it is an important link in the promotion of the principle of complementarity and the assumption of responsibility by national authorities following a conflict. In that connection, my delegation supports activities to bolster national judiciary capacities, enabling State institutions of beneficiary States to take in the experience gained and the best practices with regard to the Mechanism in order to prosecute perpetrators of mass crimes.

We welcome the advanced training provided in February by the Mechanism's Office of the Prosecutor in Dakar on investigation and prosecution for international crimes in Central Africa and West Africa. Thirty prosecutors and investigating judges from Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, the Niger, the Central African Republic and Senegal participated in this high-level training. Côte d'Ivoire strongly encourages the Office of the Prosecutor to take all necessary measures to effectively hold the follow-up session in Abidjan.

Despite its supposed residual functions, the Mechanism plays an undeniable role in the respect for international law and the fight against impunity in the regions of ex-Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Perpetrators of mass crimes are still at large. The Mechanism should pursue them, apprehend them and judge them.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire invites the international community and the Council to support the efforts of the Mechanism and to provide it the necessary support and cooperation to enable it to complete its tasks in order to successfully discharge its mandate.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank President Meron and Prosecutor Brammertz for their letters (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471) and briefings.

Six months after the closure of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and more than two years after the closure of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals has demonstrated that it is fully independent and capable of effectively implementing the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council in resolution 1966 (2010).

France welcomes the respect of the timetable for legal proceedings, with its April 2018 decision on the *Šešelj* case and an expected appeal judgement in the Karadžić case in December 2018, well ahead of schedule. France thanks the staff for their work and reaffirms the temporary nature of the mechanism, which must innovate, simplify and adapt its procedures and working methods, giving due consideration to the diversity of legal systems, and complete all the trials in progress within the set time limits.

France also welcomes the transfer to Senegal and Benin of persons convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to serve their sentences there. We recognize the importance of a commitment by all Member States to assisting the Mechanism in the implementation of its mandate, in particular with regard to the enforcement of sentences. It is a

decisive contribution to the work of justice that we are pursuing, which must be welcomed and encouraged. France also recalls that States are required to cooperate with the Mechanism, in particular in the pursuit and apprehension of the eight fugitives indicted by the ICTR, for which the Mechanism is responsible. Their crimes cannot go unpunished.

During the period under review, the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) assessed the working methods of the Mechanism and issued its report on 8 March. In that regard, France welcomes the Mechanism's cooperation and the submission of the progress report (see S/2018/471) on its work, in accordance with presidential statement S/PRST/2018/6, of 19 March.

We call on the Mechanism to implement the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services in order to continue to meet the austerity and efficiency requirements, as identified by OIOS in its report. In that regard, we welcome the adoption of a code of conduct and a disciplinary mechanism for judges.

Our semi-annual debate is an opportunity to recall the major work of the international community in the service of the fight against impunity and reconciliation, and the responsibility incumbent on the States concerned to ensure that this work is ongoing and on people's minds by continuing their tireless efforts to prosecute the perpetrators of crimes within their jurisdiction. Those are the conditions for genuine national and regional reconciliation.

France welcomes the assistance provided by the Mechanism to national courts responsible for prosecuting the perpetrators of international crimes committed in former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. On the other hand, the feeble cooperation among the Balkan States in the prosecution of middle-level criminals, noted by Prosecutor Brammertz, is worrying. For France and the European Union, cooperation with the Mechanism and regional cooperation remain a priority. I would also like to echo the concern expressed by Prosecutor Brammertz regarding certain persons, convicted by international criminal tribunals, denying their crimes and their responsibility as soon as they are released.

We wish to reaffirm here that judicial decisions on war crimes, genocide crimes and crimes against humanity committed in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda are based on facts and responsibilities rigorously established through fair trials. Those judicial decisions, like all judicial decisions, as well as the duty to respect victims, are binding on all. We encourage the Mechanism to continue its discussions on the introduction of early release conditions.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Ambassador of Peru, Chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, his entire team, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Office of Legal Affairs and the Office of Internal Oversight Services for their efforts to implement resolution 1966 (2010).

The resolution that the Security Council will adopt by the end of this month should allow this work, which is obviously not yet complete, to continue. More than ever, the fight against impunity and for an independent and impartial judiciary must be at the heart of the Council's action, given that justice is a prerequisite for lasting peace and security.

Mr. Li Yongsheng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China thanks President Maron and Prosecutor Brammertz for their briefings on the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

China knows that during the reporting period, the Mechanism continued to make progress in its traditional activities. An appeal judgements has been rendered on the *Šešelj* case. The *Stanišić and Simatović* case, the *Karadžić* case and the *Mladić* case continue to move forward. Eight convicted persons have been transferred to Senegal and Benin to serve their sentences. In that regard, China knows that President Meron is committed to completing the *Karadžić* case by the end of the year.

China welcomes the efforts and progress made by the Office of the Prosecutor in tracking fugitives of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. China hopes that, in line with the requirement of the Security Council to be small, temporary and efficient, the Mechanism will continue to take measures to efficiently push forward case trials and other work. China commends the Office of Internal Oversight Services for its evaluation report on the working methods of the Mechanism. It is our hope that the Mechanism will implement the recommendations in the report. China consistently supports the international rule of law and the work of the Mechanism.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Peru in its capacity as Chair of the Informal

Working Group on International Tribunals and the Office of Legal Affairs for their work.

Ms. Schoulgin Nyoni (Sweden): I would like to thank President Theodor Meron and Prosecutor Serge Brammertz for their useful and informative briefings on the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

As this is the first open meeting on this topic since the closure of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) at the end of last year, we would also like to once again express our sincere appreciation to the ICTY and its staff for the invaluable contributions to international criminal justice and the development of international law. We also appreciate the efforts made, both by the ICTY and the Mechanism, to ensure a smooth and efficient transition of the functions and services of the Tribunal to the Mechanism.

The Mechanism will continue to fulfil and complete the important work of the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Both Tribunals have played a key role in the fight against impunity for the gravest crimes of concern to the international community, such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. They were both forerunners of the International Criminal Court, which is the only permanent, treaty-based international court with jurisdiction in the fight against impunity today. In that regard, we repeat the importance of ensuring the universality of the Rome Statute.

In order for the Mechanism to complete its functions and to prevent any delays in the implementation of its mandate, it is essential that the Mechanism has the required resources to deliver on its mandate. It is also imperative that its independence and integrity be upheld. The Mechanism has made important headway since our previous briefing in December 2017 (see S/PV.8120). The continued development of the ongoing cases, including the completion of the case against Vojislav Šešelj, demonstrates the progress of the Mechanism. There has also been significant progress in relation to gender-related matters. We welcome the fact that the Registry is now reviewing how policies on the support and the protection of victims and witnesses can better reflect gender-sensitive and gender-appropriate approaches. We also applaud the achievement by the Mechanism of gender parity at the level of professional staff within the Organization, as well as the appointment of focal points, including for gender issues.

We note with satisfaction that the practice of judges exercising their functions remotely has worked well, having been described as efficient and innovative in the evaluation report (S/2018/206) of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS). We also welcome the work to revise the Code of Professional Conduct for the Judges of the Tribunal (see S/2016/976, annex, enclosure VII), which is an important element of ensuring judicial accountability. We further note the efforts made towards the transition to a digital archive. The report on the evaluation carried out by the OIOS made a number of important recommendations for the Mechanism going forward. We are pleased to see that the Mechanism has already begun to implement those recommendations.

If the Mechanism is to succeed in delivering on the mandate that we have given it, all Member States must cooperate fully and provide full and unequivocal support for its work. In that regard, Sweden is one of the countries that has received convicted individuals for the enforcement of sentences.

We note the concerns expressed by Rwanda and underscore the importance of continued work to promote communciation and cooperation with the Government of Rwanda. We welcome the Mechanism's work in assisting national jurisdictions that prosecute international crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda. We call on Member States to assist the Mechanism in the arrest of the eight fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda who remain at large.

Finally, I want to join other representatives in expressing our appreciation to Peru for its able leadership as Chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals. We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Group going forward.

Mr. Almunayekh (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Judge Theodor Meron, President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and Prosecutor Serge Brammertz for their informative briefings on the progress made in the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

By the end of last year, we saw the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia complete its mandate to prosecute those responsible for grave violations of international humanitarian law in that country. We have therefore been able to close the first

two international criminal tribunals for the prosecution of the perpetrators of grave violations of international humanitarian law. That jurisdiction was fully transferred to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, which is complementing the Security Council approach to establish justice and end impunity in order to achieve international peace and security. Peace means not only putting an end to armed conflicts, but also ensuring justice for victims of war crimes, genocide and ethnic cleansing. This can be done by prosecuting those found responsible for perpetrating such crimes in accordance with the relevant international laws.

We take note of the report of the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals on the progress of its work (see S/2018/347). In that regard, I would like to make the following three points.

First, we welcome the efforts of the President and the Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism to improve its work by adopting effective working methods that help to facilitate legal research, analysis and the drafting of decisions and judgements issued by the Mechanism, without prejudice to the mandate set out in resolution 1966 (2010) and despite the challenges it is facing. Those challenges include heightened judicial activity, such as requests for the review of judgements rendered, access to confidential information and allegations of contempt of court; no approval by the General Assembly for the Mechanism's proposed budget for the biennium 2018–2019. The Mechanism therefore had to prepare a revised and reduced budget by decreasing the size of its staff, which had a negative impact on the implementation of the Mechanism's mandate, as well as on its staff morale.

Secondly, we commend the prompt proceedings undertaken by judges, prosecutors and the Registrar during the trials before the judges of the Mechanism so as to swiftly issue judgements against the accused, such as the issuance ahead of schedule of final judgements in recent cases.

Thirdly, the Mechanism should take the remarks of Member States on its work into account in order to achieve the desired outcome, in particular in cases of conditional early release.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Peru for its strenuous efforts as Chair of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals, as well as the Office of Legal Affairs.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): I would first like to thank President Meron and Prosecutor Brammertz of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for their briefings and for their comprehensive report (see S/2018/347). We also wish to thank Ambassador Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative of Peru, for his leadership of the Security Council Informal Working Group on International Tribunals.

After 24 years of service, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) completed its mandate and closed its doors last December. The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to express its sincere gratitude to all those who worked for and with the ICTY. In many aspects, the court was unique and groundbreaking — unique in its contribution to international criminal justice case law, in its prosecution of sexual violence as a war crime and in convicting so many people accused of atrocity crimes.

The closure of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in 2015 and of the ICTY in 2017 mark the end of an era. We are now moving from the early stages of justice in Rwanda and in the Balkans to a more mature stage. However, much work remains to be done. In that respect, we are grateful that the Mechanism has now assumed the responsibilities and all remaining functions from both the ICTY and the ICTR.

Today, I will focus on three issues: first, the judicial workload of the Mechanism; secondly, capacity-building; and thirdly, the early release policy.

My first point is on the judicial workload of the Mechanism, which is higher than anticipated. We note with satisfaction that the three cases on the docket of the Mechanism are nonetheless all ahead of schedule. The working methods implemented by the Mechanism have enabled the judges to expeditiously render judgments in the shorter legal proceedings. We fully support those efficient working methods and encourage the Mechanism to continue along that path.

Turning to my second point, the capacity-building and outreach activities of the Prosecutor, we fully support the three priorities of the Prosecutor to, complete all trials and appeals expeditiously, locate and arrest the eight remaining fugitives and assist national

jurisdictions in prosecuting international crimes. We would like to underscore the importance of the last priority in particular.

With the closure of both Tribunals, for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, ensuring accountability for war crimes in the countries involved now entirely depends on national judicial authorities. It is of the utmost importance that national judicial authorities be assisted, supported and advised in prosecuting war crimes. We encourage the Prosecutor to continue those very important activities.

Turning to my third point, the early release policy, we take note of the current discussion. In that regard, we acknowledge and underscore the authority given to the Mechanism's President by its statute in that regard. The international legal order and the rule of law require the international community to respect and implement judicial decisions taken by the Mechanism in accordance with the statute.

In conclusion, the Netherlands proudly hosted the ICTY in The Hague and is proud to host the Mechanism there as well, together with many other international legal institutions. The quality of those international legal institutions is determined by the quality of the staff members and the quality of their leadership. In our view, therefore, the prudent and careful following of relevant decision-making procedures is crucial when appointing those leading the institutions. That also applies to the role of the Security Council in this regard.

Our Constitution obliges our Government to promote and protect the international legal order, and international criminal justice is a key element of that endeavour. Let me once again commend Prosecutor Brammertz and his team for all their hard work. To President Meron, I should like to express my thanks for his statement of two weeks ago before the Security Council (see S/PV.8262); in particular, his personal note moved my delegation and was quite compelling. We share his concerns that international criminal justice is still very much in its early stages, and therefore at a highly vulnerable stage of development. The Kingdom of the Netherlands remains determined to fight impunity and to ensure that justice is done by victims of international crimes worldwide. We will continue to protect and promote the international legal order and to do our utmost for international criminal justice.

Mrs. Mele Colifa (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Sir, for having organized today's meeting, and to welcome Judge Theodor Meron and the Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism of Criminal Courts, Mr. Serge Brammertz, and thank them for their valuable, informative and enlightening briefings. We also want to thank the Chair of the Informal Working Group and his entire team for the outstanding work they are carrying out.

In general terms, the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea welcomes the significant progress in the execution of the mandate of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, as recognized in the March 2018 evaluation report (S/2018/206) of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS).

However, we must note that we have observed a lack of uniformity in the application of rule 151 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, referring to the General Rules for the Granting of Pardon, Commutation of Sentence and Early Release. Specifically, we refer to the latest persons convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to have been released before having served out their full sentences.

While those rulings were issued following the consideration of circumstances held to justify a reduction in sentence or a pardon, it is also true that the gravity of the crimes committed and the irreparable damage caused are not open to discussion. We therefore urge the Mechanism to cooperate with victims and take into account their opinions, especially in cases of pardon or early release of persons duly convicted of war crimes, genocide or crimes against humanity, always in accordance with due process. There is no peace without justice, and it is important that victims feel that justice has been done, since decision may foment attitudes of revenge and hatred.

We underscore the need for the Security Council to show unity in upholding the rule of law, ensuring accountability and preventing impunity, in particular for those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as other serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in order to ensure they are not repeated.

In establishing the Mechanism, to cite but one example, the Security Council once again demonstrated its commitment to peace and to upholding international law and international humanitarian law by supporting

the peaceful settlement of disputes, ensuring accountability and promoting the fight against a pervasive culture of impunity. However, to echo what Judge Meron said a few weeks ago in this very Chamber (see S/PV.8262), demanding accountability for international crimes entails doing much more than simply cooperating with international tribunals and specialized entities. We agree with his observation that, for accountability and an international order based on the rule of law to truly take hold, officials of national jurisdictions will have to shoulder the lion's share of this work, since it is only through broad-based national participation and by using all the tools at our disposal, including universal jurisdiction, that we may hope to address the shortcomings in accountability. Any training policy for national legal institutions in that regard will therefore enjoy the strong support of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

We also support the recommendations of OIOS and call on States to redouble their efforts to collaborate with the Mechanism.

I would like to underscore that all of my remarks should in no way detract from the excellent and arduous work being carried out by the Mechanism. We simply wish to point out that, in keeping with the foreign policy of our Government, we always advocate dialogue, close cooperation and cooperation.

Lastly, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea is firmly committed to an international order based on the rule of law with the United Nations at its core, whereby the Security Council must continue promoting mechanisms such as the establishment of tribunals to combat the culture of impunity in post-conflict situations.

Mr. Radomski (Poland): I would like to thank President Theodor Meron and Prosecutor Serge Brammertz for their informative reports (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471) and briefings, and to pay tribute to their commitment to fighting impunity and ensuring accountability by way of the high quality work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT). Let me also join other members of the Security Council in expressing our thanks to Peru for very ably and effectively chairing the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals.

Poland notes with satisfaction the significant progress made in the work of the Mechanism and looks forward to its further achievements. Recognition is due to the efforts of the President, the Prosecutor and the staff in carrying out their tasks effectively and with a sense of commitment while facing a considerable workload, including increased judicial activity and a large number of challenges.

We appreciate in particular the focus on the expeditious completion of trials and appeals, and we welcome the numerous innovative, flexible and cost-effective practices and arrangements adopted to that end. Instances of proceedings held ahead of previous projected schedules are encouraging. Also positive is the commencement of the implementation by the Mechanism of the recommendations made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in March 2018. Moreover, the efforts undertaken by the Mechanism to protect and assist the victims and witnesses of atrocities are especially commendable.

We take note of the challenges that the Mechanism faces, including in relation to its budgetary situation. Also in this respect, the crucial importance of sustained cooperation and support from States Members of the United Nations must be acknowledged, as we have a major influence on the timely and efficient fulfilment of the mandate of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. In this context, we call on all States to fully cooperate with the Mechanism, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and to render the necessary assistance to it, especially with regard to the location and arrest of the remaining fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Finally, let me underline that international criminal justice institutions, including the Mechanism, play a crucial role in upholding accountability and fighting impunity, which are key to effective conflict prevention. Allow me to reassure the Council of Poland's continued and unwavering support for the Mechanism.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are very grateful for the briefings by the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Judge Theodor Meron, and the Prosecutor, Mr. Serge Brammertz. We take this opportunity to reiterate to them our strong support in the discharge of the duties that have been entrusted to them. We should like also to thank and congratulate Peru for its work at the head of the Informal Working Group on International Tribunals.

There is no doubt that the work carried out by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

(ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has made a landmark contribution over the past 24 years to the fight against impunity. Both bodies have played a major role in the quest for justice and the restoration of the rule of law. On this understanding, and following the closure of the ICTY last December, the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals has taken on the primary responsibility for concluding, in a timely and effective way, the remaining trials transferred to its purview.

The Mechanism must implement, with the highest degree of rigour, the mandate conferred on it in resolution 1966 (2010), of 22 December 2010, not just continuing with the case law, rights and obligations of both tribunals, but also taking on the vital role of strengthening and supporting the work of national jurisdictions. In all this it must abide by its original design concept, meaning that it must be a small, temporary and efficient structure whose functions and size will decrease over time.

We have taken due note of the progress made in the jurisdictional activities carried out during the reporting period, including a new, unanticipated trial in the *Stanišić and Simatović* case, as well as in appeals hearings and review procedures. We would also highlight the assistance and cooperation provided by the Office of the Prosecutor to national jurisdictions so as to help them with the strengthening and development of their domestic capacities.

Moreover, we believe that the holding of remote hearings is an innovative initiative that is efficient in terms of both time savings and budgetary savings. Nonetheless, this initiative needs to be improved and further developed in order to guarantee better levels of interaction between the judges. It is also key to address the possible risks that it might present in terms of the security of data and of confidential information.

We would highlight the Mechanism's capacity to discharge multiple functions simultaneously in the cases handed over to it by the ICTR and the ICTY. We urge the Mechanism to strengthen its harmonization and integration efforts, taking steps to prevent the differences in work culture between the Offices in Arusha and The Hague from affecting the work of the Mechanism.

Despite the progress reported, we wish to express our alarm at the number of fugitives who have not yet been apprehended and brought before the Mechanism for trial, despite the unceasing coordination activities carried out by the Office of the Prosecutor alongside States, regional and international organizations such as INTERPOL. It is important in that context to recall that criminal responsibility is individual and that no community or nation is responsible for the acts committed by individuals. That understanding should encourage States to cooperate with investigations in order to avoid impunity and guarantee reparations for harm caused, which is a vital prerequisite for reconciliation.

Moreover, instances of early release and related problems are an issue that give us cause for great concern, given that there appear to be gaps in terms of the criteria for their implementation. In that respect, we call on the Mechanism, through its various bodies, to take the measures necessary to resolve the situation and to prevent the legacy and the work of the ICTY and the ICTR from being tarnished or diminished by the release of individuals who then proceed to deny their crimes or attempt to justify their crimes against humanity.

We have taken note of the difficulties encountered during the reporting period on the relocation of 11 individuals who had served their sentences fully or who had been acquitted of all charges. There may be a possible humanitarian situation in this respect that needs to be resolved and addressed quickly by the Mechanism. For this reason, the support and assistance of the international community is particularly important.

We have taken note of the assessment carried out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the functions of and the work carried out by the Mechanism for the period 2016-2017. We note the generally positive assessment and have also taken note of the six recommendations contained therein and call on the various bodies of the Mechanism to implement same as soon as possible.

Finally, we urge the Mechanism to continue to develop its jurisdictional activities in a determined manner, making effective and efficient use of the resources allocated to it, abiding by its temporary nature and taking the precautions necessary to implement its actions over the short and medium term.

Ms. Guadey (Ethiopia): I would like to start by thanking the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Judge Meron, and its Prosecutor, Serge Brammertz, for their

comprehensive progress report and briefing on the work of the Mechanism.

We welcome the measures taken by the Mechanism, including the Office of the Prosecutor, to further enhance its efficiency as well as to streamline its internal working methods and processes within the chambers, despite its small staff and tight resources. We note with appreciation the work done by the Mechanism in assuming the responsibility for all functions remaining from both the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia after their closure, particularly their residual judicial mandates. The measures taken by the Office of the Prosecutor to assist and build capacity in national criminal justice sectors with a view to supporting the prosecution of war crimes cases arising out of the conflicts in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are also commendable.

We have noted some of the challenges raised in the report (see S/2018/471), in particular in relation to the decision of the General Assembly not to approve the Mechanism's budget for 2018-2019 and its implications for the long-term planning and operations of the Mechanism. While welcoming the measures taken by the Mechanism to reduce the impact of the decision, the concerns raised in relation to its implications for the completion of the functions of the Mechanism in a timely and effective manner require further consideration.

We continue to note with concern that eight fugitives indicted by the ICTR and five fugitives who are currently expected to be brought to trial in Rwanda remain at large. In that regard, we appreciate the measures taken by the Office of the Prosecutor to track and arrest remaining fugitives. It is important that States continue to provide the necessary assistance to the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism, including in the tracking of those fugitives.

We have also noted in the report the humanitarian challenges faced by the Mechanism with regard to the relocation of acquitted and released persons. In our view, such issues require proper consideration in the upcoming review of the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals.

Some of the issues that continue to be raised by Rwanda in relation to the early release of persons convicted by the ICTR or the Residual Mechanism cannot be overlooked. We have noted the briefing note on the practice of the Residual Mechanism with regard to the early release of persons convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Mechanism itself.

In the process leading towards the early release of a person convicted by the ICTR, in accordance with rule 150 of the Amended Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Mechanism, consultation with any judges of the sentencing Chamber who are judges of the Mechanism or at least two other judges, where none of the judges who imposed the sentence are judges of the Mechanism, is of the utmost importance. In addition, consultation between the President of the Mechanism and the country concerned, Rwanda, on early release, in particular on the implication of such early release for the victims and the community at large, is vital. In that regard, lessons could be drawn from the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone.

I would like to conclude by reiterating the need for continued support from the Council to the Mechanism in the fulfilment of its mandated residual functions. The support of Member States to the Residual Mechanism also remains critical, including in relation to the tracking of fugitives and the relocation of acquitted or released persons, as well as in addressing budget-related issues.

Mr. Simonoff (United States of America): I would like to thank President Meron and Prosecutor Brammertz for their informative briefings.

The United States would like to begin by recognizing President Meron. He has led the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals since 2012, overseeing the assumption of responsibilities from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). President Meron's efforts, through his leadership of the Mechanism have helped ensure that victims of horrific atrocities addressed by the ICTR and ICTY receive meaningful measures of justice. He has done so while running a lean, efficient operation.

The volume of work that the Mechanism conducts is impressive given its lean operations — 253 judicial decisions and orders issued during the past reporting period alone, in addition to an ongoing trial in the case *Prosecutor v. Jovica Stanišić and Franko Simatović*, ongoing appeal proceedings in the cases *Prosecutor v. Radovan Karadžić* and *Prosecutor v. Ratko Mladić*

and preparations for appeals in the case *Prosecutor v. Augustin Ngirabatware*.

We would also like to recognize the work of Prosecutor Brammertz. In particular we commend his Office's continued efforts in managing trials and appeals cases, as well as the renewed focus on the Tracking Unit activities to locate and apprehend remaining fugitives. We also appreciate the ongoing efforts to provide assistance to national war crimes prosecutions, encourage regional judicial cooperation and support reconciliation, all of which build on the legacy of accountability established by the Tribunals.

With regard to the future, we urge the Mechanism to continue to implement the recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), as described in its report (S/2018/206) issued in March. It is important to note that the OIOS concluded that the Mechanism had "achieved much of what the Security Council envisaged in resolution 1966 (2010)" (*S/2018/206, p. 1*). The Mechanism took advantage of operational innovations to streamline its work further. The implementation of OIOS recommendations will help the Mechanism become even more efficient and effective at continuing to achieve its mandate. We also welcome the revision of the Code of Professional Conduct for the Judges of the Mechanism to include a disciplinary mechanism.

We encourage the Mechanism to consider proposals to respond to concerns raised by some States about the early-release regime. We note that some individuals who were released early have subsequently denied responsibility for their crimes. We share the concern that denial undermines the fight against impunity. We recognize and encourage the practice of consulting with the States concerned about the early-release regime.

In the former Yugoslavia, we welcome the Prosecutor's report of productive cooperation between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia on transferred cases. At the same time, we are concerned about his report that Croatian authorities are not engaging in a similar way, as well as a report of a breakdown in cooperation between Kosovo and Serbia with regard to war crimes prosecutions. We again highlight that, although the ICTY may have closed last December, the pursuit of justice for atrocities related to the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia is not over. There are many hundreds of cases currently in the hands of national authorities in the region. We call on all of the Governments concerned to credibly investigate and prosecute or otherwise resolve those cases, while cooperating with one another and the Mechanism to that end.

The United States also remains concerned about the failure of the Government of Serbia to execute three arrest warrants for individuals charged with contempt of court in relation to witness intimidation in the case *Prosecutor v. Vojislav Šešelj*. We continue to encourage Serbia to fulfil its obligations, including with respect to cooperation with the Mechanism. The United States urges all States to undertake efforts to arrest and surrender the eight remaining fugitives indicted by the ICTR as soon as possible. The United States continues to offer up to $5 million for information leading to their arrest. The work of the Mechanism, like that of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia previously, reminds us that in the face of terrible atrocities, we can work together to hold perpetrators accountable and to achieve a measure of justice for victims. We look forward to continuing to support the Mechanism in the fight against impunity.

Mr. Temenov (Kazakhstan): I would like to thank the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Judge Theodor Meron, and the Prosecutor of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Mr. Serge Brammertz, for their reports (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471) and for their informative and comprehensive briefings.

We would also like to warmly welcome Her Excellency Ms. Nela Kuburović, Minister of Justice of Serbia, as well as the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Rwanda.

Kazakhstan is committed to combating impunity and supporting international criminal tribunals. My delegation notes with satisfaction the successful continuation of the Mechanism's work related to the fulfilment of a number of functions of international criminal tribunals, such as enforcing sentences, protecting victims and witnesses, managing archives and smoothly and effectively transitioning to the Mechanism the remaining functions of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We greatly appreciate the leadership of President Theodor Meron in successfully accomplishing that task.

Kazakhstan welcomes the fact that despite the difficulties the Mechanism has faced owing to the

reduction in its budget for the current biennium, it has made significant progress in establishing itself as a small, temporary and effective structure. We are pleased with the expenditure reduction plan that it has developed and implemented.

We welcome the Mechanism's development of rules, procedures, and policies that are harmonized and based on the best practices of both Tribunals, as well as its own practice. This will ensure that it can fulfil its mandate effectively and as well as possible. We consider the code of professional conduct that has been formulated for the Mechanism's judges as a progressive step towards strengthening the principles of accountability and transparency in its functions. However, we believe there is always room for improvement and urge the Mechanism to take all necessary measures to build transparent and accountable partnerships with all the stakeholders involved. Given the paramount importance of ensuring that Member States work with the Mechanism in order to see international justice done, we call on all States to cooperate fully with it. In the context of the Mechanism's priority task of seeking the arrest of eight fugitives, we are pleased to note the Prosecutor's efforts in that regard and hope that they will be arrested and brought to trial as soon as possible.

I would like to mention the work that the Mechanism is doing with regard to the archives of both Tribunals, which are truly priceless for both practical and research purposes. We welcome and appreciate the Mechanism's development and implementation of an integrated system for managing archives and records. Considering that, we hope that the Mechanism's reduced budget will not affect the preservation of that heritage in any way. Kazakhstan greatly appreciates the Mechanism's role and place in the administrative system of international justice and in helping to preserve our faith in international law and ensure that those guilty of committing grave crimes will not go unpunished. Lastly, we affirm our firm commitment to strengthening the rule of law and promoting justice in the world by supporting the Mechanism in every aspect of its work.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I will now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the Russian Federation.

Our delegation closely monitors the work of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, particularly the judicial proceedings conducted within its framework, and we are grateful to the Mechanism's leaders for their detailed information and reports on that. We pay close attention to the extent to which it has been able to learn from the activities of the International Criminal Tribunals established by the Security Council. As we know, the history of one of them, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), was marred by a selective approach to justice, numerous delays in its criminal proceedings and violations of the rights of the accused to a fair trial.

The Mechanism's current two-year mandate ends on 30 June, as we are all aware. This month the Security Council has to finish reviewing the Mechanism's activities to date and reflect the results in an appropriate resolution, whose adoption is an essential condition for extending the work of the Mechanism for another two years. By the end of June, the terms of office of the members of the Register of Judges, the President and the Prosecutor of the Mechanism will expire.

Unfortunately, our analysis of the Mechanism's practice in specific cases confirms that it has inherited the ICTY's flawed working methods. The verdict in the case of Vojislav Šešelj is another confirmation of that. Rewriting an acquittal as a guilty verdict with a sentence to time served only underlines the shortcomings of the justice model in the ICTY and Residual Mechanism's format.

Similarly, very typical conclusions about what is going on with the Mechanism can be drawn from the report (S/2018/206) of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) prepared for the Security Council's review. Judging by the OIOS report, the Mechanism seems to be taking the same line as the ICTY with regard to to both internal administration and personnel policy issues. As a result, the Office indicates that there has been friction between management and workers and a deteriorating atmosphere and low morale among the staff, and Council members have discussed that this morning. We warned of the danger of this as long as two years ago when a proposal was made to automatically reassign the ICTY leadership to the corresponding posts in the Mechanism. Incidentally, for some reason the extent of the judicial workload came as a surprise to the Mechanism.

We are concerned about the OIOS report's assertions that the Mechanism's Arusha branch is perceived by some of the staff in The Hague as a field office. We believe that the Prosecutor and Secretary's move to

Arusha, announced in the report of the President of the Mechanism, will improve administrative harmonization and unity in both branches of the Mechanism as one entity. We also hope that the move will enable the Mechanism's leadership to concentrate on its mandated activities. Up to now the Prosecutor's report is still making too much of the issue of combating impunity in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. It again includes irrelevant evaluations of the prospects for European integration with respect to those countries, including in the context of the related strategy of the European Union.

We would like to remind the Council that the Mechanism should not overstep the limits of its mandate and functions. As we have frequently noted, the Residual Mechanism was established in accordance with Security Council resolution 1966 (2010) as a temporary body, with strictly limited powers for completing processes that the ICTY and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda were unable to finish. That is why its official title includes the word "residual". The temporary nature of the Mechanism's mandate requires that its residual functions — including legal proceedings, whose delay on the pretext of reduced funding is unacceptable — be completed as quickly as possible.

We would also like to point out that the Mechanism, according to its Statute, does not have the authority to analyse the quality of national judicial systems. The staff of the Mechanism should not be distracted by any kinds of educational activities or events such as seminars and training sessions, particularly for third countries that are not part of the relevant region.

We would especially like to emphasize the importance of protecting the right of the accused to timely, appropriate and high-quality medical care. Among other things, that right requires using reliable, unembellished information about defendants' health. The ICTY's mistakes in that regard must not be repeated in any circumstances. Its legacy is marred by the negligence that led to an entire roster of people dying in custody. In general, we believe that at this stage, when we have guiding estimates of how long it will take to complete the proceedings in the cases of Ratko Mladić, Jovica Stanišić and Franco Simatović, it is time for the Council to think objectively about winding up the Mechanism's activities in the foreseeable future.

In conclusion, I want to say that we hope that the Mechanism's leadership will produce a well-thought-out plan for the course of its legal proceedings and other statutory activities. We expect reliable projections, maximum efficiency and transparency, as well as strict adherence to judicial standards, including trial timelines. In our view, the Security Council has already provided all procedural and other opportunities for that to the Mechanism.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the Minister of Justice of Serbia.

Ms. Kuburović (Serbia): I thank the Security Council for this opportunity to address it today on behalf of the Republic of Serbia.

Serbia fulfils all its obligations regarding cooperation with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. After the closing of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), only one first-instance case and two appeal cases remain before the Mechanism.

My country has harmonized its legislation with the relevant standards and facilitated cooperation with the Mechanism with regard to all acts recognized by the Security Council in the ICTY statute as serious international crimes. By doing so Serbia has proved that it is committed to fighting impunity. That commitment is also reflected also in the number and rank of accused persons processed by the Tribunal.

Serbia continues to facilitate the Mechanism's Office of the Prosecutor's free access to all evidence, documents, archives and witnesses; evidently, the completion of the work of the Tribunal has had no impact on cooperation with the Mechanism. The cooperation takes place unencumbered. All requests have been addressed, including those of the Office of the Prosecutor, the Chambers and the Registry. And the documents from the archives of State organs are forwarded expeditiously.

The ongoing cooperation is centred on the case *Prosecutor v. Petar Jojić and Vjerica Radeta*. On two occasions, the Office of the Prosecutor requested 1,677 documents comprising several thousand pages. In responding to the requests and proceeding from the recommendations of the competent institutions, Serbia asked for the application of Trial Chamber protective measures. Requests to testify by two persons, who are members of Serbia's security services, have also been made and approval has been granted. They, too,

have been relieved of their obligations with respect to State, military and/or official secrets. Trial Chamber protective measures have been requested in that case as well.

Over more than 20 years, Serbia has handed over to the Tribunal's Office of the Prosecutor, its Chambers and defence teams hundreds of thousands of documents, many of which, however, have not been used in the proceedings. Notwithstanding the promise that the unused documents that do not belong to the court records will be returned to Serbia, that has not happened yet. In that context, let me point out that the general question of the Tribunal's archives has not been resolved; its fate and use are related to the establishment of information centres in the States that emerged from the former Yugoslavia. During the latest visit of the Tribunal's President Agius to Belgrade, Serbia indicated its readiness to establish such a centre in Belgrade and designated a representative to a joint working group that would also include representatives of the Tribunal. Yet, despite two overtures, no response has been received in that regard to date.

In its continuous efforts to improve its judicial system, Serbia has followed the guidelines defined, among others, by its national strategy for the prosecution of war crimes. The strategy was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia on 20 February 2016 in full support of all judicial and executive bodies included in investigations, as well as the organizations monitoring and reporting on those proceedings as independent observers.

On 26 August 2017, the Government established a body to monitor the implementation of the strategy. It consists of representatives from all the relevant institutions, including the War Crimes Prosecutor, and is chaired by the Minister of Justice. Two reports had been adopted by 31 March, while a third is being prepared for adoption in July. The reports are published in both Serbian and English on the website of the Ministry of Justice.

The Mechanism's Office of the Prosecutor has extended full support to Serbia's draft prosecutorial strategy for the investigation and prosecution of war crimes for the period 2018-2023. In supporting the draft strategy, the Prosecutor stated that the Office reiterates its full commitment to supporting Serbia's Prosecutor's Office in carrying out its important mandate to fight impunity for war crimes in Serbia. Serbia's Prosecutor's Office for War Crimes adopted the strategy on 4 April.

In the context of the implementation of the national and prosecution strategies, as well as of the capacity of the Prosecutor's Office for War Crimes of Serbia, it is important to point out that a Deputy Prosecutor was appointed recently and that the election of two other deputies is expected to take place within a month. In addition, the Government allocated funds to capacity improvements last May, while the Ministry of Justice increased the number of Prosecutor's assistants by four and approved the appointment of three more deputies.

In addition, the Judicial Academy is preparing a curriculum to train prosecutors and judges to update their knowledge of techniques for investigating and trying war crimes and for protecting victims and witnesses. The training will take place in cooperation with the Mechanism's Office of the Prosecutor.

In his report (S/2018/347, annex), the Mechanism's Prosecutor welcomes the number of cases processed in Croatia, the majority of which were tried in absentia. Let me recall that Serbia's Office of the Prosecutor for War Crimes has suspended 30 cases, involving more than 70 indicted persons, because their whereabouts were unknown. Are we to understand that Serbia should have recourse to instituting trials in absentia in order to make the number of cases tried and resolved satisfactory?

The Prosecutor goes on to say in his report that Serbia has not yet taken meaningful steps against high-level suspects.In that regard, it should be borne in mind that many of them were sentenced before the Tribunal and that its practice related to the acquittal of the indictees impacts the prosecution criteria and standards of the Serbian side. Furthermore, Serbia cannot process the war crimes committed against the Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija because of Pristina's continued refusal to cooperate with Belgrade and respond to the requests of the Office of the Prosecutor for War Crimes, as also reflected in the report.

After the Mechanism took over from the Tribunal the case *Prosecutor v. Petar Jojić and Vjerica Radeta*, Single Judge Aydin Sefa Akay requested Serbia to confirm that it could process that case. Proceeding from the opinion of the competent court and the Office of the Prosecutor, and with a commitment to providing all procedural guarantees for a fair trial, Serbia in fact confirmed its ability and readiness to take over the case.

The Amicus Curiae Prosecutor requested to be actively included in the proceeding and the Single Judge approved her request; she submitted her protestations to the Single Judge of the take over of the case by Serbia. The Judge forwarded the submissions in the form of a court order to Serbia requesting it to state its position thereon within a certain period. The Ministry of Justice replied to the Judge on three occasions, in April and May.

The purpose of including the Amicus Curiae Prosecutor in that case is not clear, unless it is intended to delay the proceedings. We are concerned about the Amicus Curiae Prosecutor's comments in that regard. She questions the competence of Serbian judicial institutions and the parliamentary immunity of Jojić and Radeta and analyses public opinion in Serbia. That exercise is irrelevant to the conduct of judicial proceedings before independent courts.

It is in Serbia's interests to process that case. I confirm once again Serbia's readiness to take it over.

We expect the Mechanism to avoid the practice of the Tribunal of procrastinating on some cases, and to complete the remaining cases within a reasonable time.

Serbia continues to be committed to processing war crimes irrespective of the nationality of the perpetrators of grievous crimes against humanity.

Successful proceedings also depend upon regional cooperation, most evident at the moment with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Serbia's judicial institutions have recognized judgements handed down in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and have taken over the prosecution of certain cases in which all process requirements had been complied with. In 2017 and 2018, judgements of Bosnia and Herzegovina courts were recognized in seven cases, with Serbian courts sentencing the defendants to 104 years in prison on the basis of those judgements. All those convicted are Serbs. However, one case, which is still pending, should not be used to dispute the cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina, as is done in the report.

In the context of cooperation with Croatia, a meeting of the Ministers of Justice in Belgrade last March resulted in the establishment of two commissions charged, respectively, with the task of exchanging lists of persons accused or sentenced for war crimes and with preparing a bilateral treaty to address war crimes processing. The first commission convened on 26 April to exchange lists and agree on the modalities for future cooperation. It is expected that the other commission will commence it swork next month, which is of paramount importance for the two countries to address outstanding bilateral issues. Serbia will do its utmost to achieve visible progress in resolving the issue of missing persons in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo and Metohija, and bring closure to their families. The joint commissions of Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina are charged with that task.

As I said in my previous statement to the Security Council (see S/PV.8120), my country's initiative related to the enforcement of sentences in persons' countries of origin will help to achieve the purpose of punishment and resocialization, which the enforcement of the sentences in faraway countries fails to do. Convicted persons do not understand the language of distant countries and cannot meet their families and other relatives. More often than not, they are kept in inadequate conditions and receive substandard health care, which was brought out in the letters of Judge Meron, the Mechanism's President, to Estonian authorities, the most recent of which was sent at the beginning of May. Serbia is ready to provide guarantees that all security measures will be taken in the event that sentences are served in the country of origin. It also accepts international monitoring.

We are concerned about the health of some accused and convicted persons. Despite Serbia's guarantees, the Mechanism rejected some requests to temporarily release certain persons for treatment. After months of delay, prison doctors eventually prescribed therapy to a convicted person identical to that proposed by Serbian doctors long before. I wish to draw the attention of the Council to inadequate medical care in certain cases. I am doing so on this occasion since I believe that the provision of adequate health care must not be contingent on goodwill or subject to manipulation; it is, in short, a basic human right.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that Serbia has no outstanding issues with the Mechanism and that its cooperation with it will continue to take place unhindered. We expect this fact to be reflected in future reports.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Vukašinović (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President,

on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would also like to thank the leaders of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals for their respective reports (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471) and for today's detailed briefings on the progress in the Mechanism's work.

We note the continued progress by the Mechanism in implementing residual activities of the now-closed International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The successful conclusion of the Mechanism's mandate in an efficient manner and within a reasonable time frame is of crucial importance for justice and reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region. Throughout the years, the cooperation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the ICTY has been steadfast and full, as evidenced by the Tribunal's reports. In the same vein, we remain committed to contributing actively to the Mechanism's efforts to accomplish its mission.

In addition to its cooperation with the ICTY, Bosnia and Herzegovina remains committed to improving the efficiency of domestic war-crimes institutions. Accountable and independent judicial institutions that enjoy public trust throughout the entire country is a precondition not only for prosecuting and punishing individual perpetrators of war crimes, but also for achieving reconciliation among Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs, who are the constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's national war crimes strategy plays a crucial role in making progress on reconciliation. The implementation of the strategy is a complex process in which many institutions at all levels of authority in Bosnia and Herzegovina participate. In that regard, we continue to make efforts to strengthen the national justice system at all levels. We are currently in the process of identifying and further defining activities for promoting the implementation of the national war crimes strategy with a view to bringing to justice persons responsible for war crimes.

The Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina filed 29 new indictments during the reporting period, having shifted its activities over the past two years from processing category 2 cases to addressing a large number of important indictments in complex cases involving senior- and mid-level suspects. We welcome the support of the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations Development Programme, in terms of strengthening the human and material resources of judicial institutions that are processing war crimes cases in the country and in terms of general capacity-building important for the full achievement of the benchmarks and goals set out in the national war crimes strategy.

Consistent cooperation among the Prosecutors' Offices and the relevant authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia, in accordance with the principles of international justice and the rule of law, is crucial to investigating and prosecuting war crimes. We are pleased that Prosecutor Brammertz has recognized that the productive cooperation between the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Prosecutor's Office for War Crimes of Serbia continues to develop and grow stronger and that, as such, sets a positive example for the region. Bosnia and Herzegovina remains committed to the promotion of stronger and more coordinated regional cooperation.

The fight against impunity in a complex, multinational State such as Bosnia and Herzegovina is a crucial precondition for achieving reconciliation and sustaining peace. In that regard, prosecuting war crimes, regardless of the national or religious origin of the perpetrators or victims, is of crucial importance for long-term stability in the country and the region.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): I welcome the President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Judge Meron, as well as Prosecutor Brammertz, and I thank them for today's briefings. I would like to assure you, Mr. President, and the highest officials of the MICT present in the Chamber today, of Croatia's full support for the mission and work of the Mechanism.

As a victim of the brutal aggression in 1990s, during which numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity were committed on its territory and against its people, Croatia was a strong supporter of the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) . We have placed our trust in the Tribunal to serve as a shield against the extreme level of brutality exercised during the aggression and to properly punish the perpetrators of the worst crimes committed in Europe since the Second World War. With that purpose in mind, from the very beginning of the ICTY's work, in 1993, until its closure, at the

end of 2017, Croatia closely and fully cooperated with the Tribunal.

Unfortunately, after more than 25 years, a significant number of victims and their families still have not found long-awaited justice. Croatia therefore fully supports the Mechanism and its continued efforts to bring to justice the most prominent perpetrators of the horrible crimes committed during the 1990s on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

Croatia did not hesitate to do its part in ensuring accountability. It is worth repeating that an important part of Croatia's accession to the European Union (EU) — and we shall soon celebrate the fifth anniversary of our EU membership — was a thorough reform of the Croatian judicial system. The reform included creating the specialized War Crimes Chambers and aligning it with the highest international war crimes prosecution standards. Full and unequivocal cooperation with the ICTY was an essential part and parcel of Croatia's EU accession process, and we have spared no effort in meeting all ICTY's cooperation requests. That is precisely the approach that we expect from all States in the region, especially from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is pivotal that they establish independent and impartial judiciaries and show restraint when it comes to any form of manipulation in investigations and prosecution processes in all types of cases, either those initiated by domestic prosecutors or those transferred to national courts by the ICTY.

In order to persist on this path and deliver results, a strong political commitment is required, as well as a more decisive approach in processing war crimes, in particular those related to the highest military ranks. Similarly, full cooperation with the Mechanism is essential, and, in that regard, the EU's principled and consistent conditionality policy serves as a strong impetus, but also as an essential control mechanism.

We remain very concerned that Serbia's lack of cooperation with the Tribunal continues with the Mechanism as well. We underline the need for Serbia to fully cooperate with the Mechanism, including by fully accepting and implementing all of its rulings and decisions. In addition, bearing in mind Serbia's continuous disregard for some of the decisions of the ICTY and the Mechanism, it would be contrary to the main principles and interests of justice to hand over to Serbia the case *Prosecutor v. Petar Jojić et al.*

Cooperation with the Mechanism, as previously with the Tribunal, as well as regional cooperation among the States concerned pertaining to war-crime issues have no alternative. Nonetheless, it has to be emphasized that regional cooperation is not a one-way street. It implies trust among the States concerned and goes hand-in-hand with a willingness and sincere commitment on the part of all States to prosecute war crimes, without any double standards or exemptions in relation to their nationals or members of certain national groups.

As just mentioned by the Serbian Minister of Justice in her statement, in a recent meeting between the Croatian and Serbian Ministers of Justice — conducted in a spirit of readiness to enhance cooperation — there was agreement on the establishment of two joint committees: one would work on bilateral agreement on cooperation regarding the prosecution of war crimes, and the other on the exchange of lists of persons accused or convicted of war crimes. In the same vein, with a view to resolving existing open issues in that area, the Croatian Minister of Justice invited his Bosnian-Herzegovinian colleague to Zagreb for a meeting, which we expect to take place next week.

With respect to the reports we have before us (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471), I have to stress that the practice of naming unindicted co-conspirators in a joint criminal enterprise is contrary in particular to the European legal tradition, but also to the practice of a number of American courts. That practice explicitly goes against the main human rights standards and rules, such as the right to a fair trial or the right to a good name and reputation. That is particularly the case when the named persons are deceased and do not have the possibility to review the judgement in a separate procedure. I will not enter into legal and other reasoning behind that well-established legal standard, but will only briefly remind the Council and the participants in the discussion of the main principle of criminal law — everyone charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty by the competent court in an inter partes procedure according to law. In addition, there is no legitimate interest or significant justification for naming unindicted co-conspirators in the ICTY or Mechanism's judgements, or in the formal statements of its highest officials.

We are deeply concerned about the widespread practice throughout the region of denying past wrongdoing — a practice that goes hand-in-hand

with the glorification of war criminals and the crimes committed. Part of that practice is revisionism, with its devastating effects on the stability of the region. Croatia therefore strongly condemns threats that Vojislav Šešelj, a convicted war criminal and current member of the Serbian National Assembly, made against the representatives of Croats in Vojvodina, Serbia.

When he was interviewed only a few hours after the Appeals Chamber sentenced him to 10 years in prison for crimes against humanity against Croats in Vojvodina in 1992, Šešelj openly stated that he would readily repeat the crimes he was convicted of, and of which he is proud. Regrettably, Serbian authorities remained silent to those repeated outrageous outbursts of hate against the Croatian minority in Vojvodina and beyond, and Mr. Šešelj is still sitting on the Serbian Parliament, contrary to Serbia's own legislation.

As confirmed by the ICTY and the Mechanism's judgements, hate speech and outrageous statements can result in catastrophic consequences, instigating war crimes and crimes against humanity. Politicians and high-level officials bear particular responsibility for unmasking such statements, their full meaning and contextualization, as well as for their absolute rejection and condemnation. That is precisely what we expect from Serbian officials, exposing Šešelj's words for what they really are, that is, evil gibberish of a convicted war criminal.

Croatia pays great attention to the remaining cases before the Mechanism, in particular the *Prosecutor v. Stanišić and Simatović* case. We have every confidence that the prosecution will provide the Trial Chamber with enough evidence to determine beyond any doubt Stanišić and Simatović's criminal responsibility in the armed conflict in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as their role in the joint criminal enterprise as established by the ICTY in the case of aggression against Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are convinced that a similar joint criminal enterprise with the purpose of establishing an ethnically homogeneous Serbian State in Bosnia and Herzegovina by criminal means will also be determined in the final judgements in the *Karadžić* and *Mladić* cases.

Before concluding, allow me to stress that the issue of missing persons is at the top of Croatia's agenda, which aims to take all measures to account for persons who perished, or remain missing, and provide their family members with any information on their fate. To that end, the strengthening of cooperation among States in the region is of the utmost importance, which includes the opening of all archives — something for which Serbia still does not show readiness. We find the Mechanism to be well-placed to play a supportive role in that regard.

Finally, let me conclude by stating that Croatia remains firmly committed to the development of good relations and cooperation with neighbouring States, and we strongly support their aspirations towards European Union membership based on full compliance with the membership conditions.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to the representative of Rwanda.

Mrs. Rugwabiza (Rwanda): First of all, it my pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. President, and Russia on assuming the presidency of the Security Council during the month of June. Let me assure you of Rwanda's full cooperation and active participation during your presidency.

I thank Judge Meron and Prosecutor Brammertz for their reports (see S/2018/347 and S/2018/471) and briefings. I also take this opportunity to particularly thank the Office of the Prosecutor, and Prosecutor Brammertz himself, for the favourable cooperation between his Office and the Prosecutor and judicial authorities in Rwanda, including cooperation on the apprehension of the remaining fugitives who are still at large.

This is a fitting occasion to assess the results and effectiveness of an important institution for international justice. In the light of the magnitude of the challenges to justice in the post-genocide era in Rwanda, my Government accords particular importance to an international mechanism that is functional and can reinforce our own efforts in ensuring justice after the atrocious crimes of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was a pioneer in establishing a credible international criminal justice system. Some of its achievements, especially the verdicts it delivered in relation to rape and media as weapons of perpetrating genocide, remain significant milestones for jurisprudence on genocide.

With those positive achievements in mind, it should be a matter of concern to all of us that the legacy of the

ICTR and the credibility of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals are seriously at stake. Since the Mechanism was established, in 2012, it has released, before the end of their sentences, more than 10 masterminds of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. Those early releases were granted in non-transparent circumstances and using inconsistent procedures. It is worth noting that the Mechanism was not able to apprehend or prosecute a single genocide fugitive during the same period due to the lack of cooperation by Member States.

A few weeks ago, my Government was very surprised to receive, for the first time, a request from the President of the Mechanism for an opinion on three additional applications for early releases of genocide convicts. We were surprised because the Government had never received such a request in the six years of the existence of the Mechanism. While we appreciate the opportunity to provide our opinion, which we did, that unique request from the Mechanism underlines the lack of transparency and the inconsistency we have been denouncing for a long time. It also demonstrated that the decision not to seek the opinion of the Government of Rwanda before or not to consult the associations of victims and survivors before was at the personal discretion of the President of the Mechanism and was never a matter of his role. One may ask what allowed the Mechanism to seek our opinion this time even as the rules have remained unchanged. I would like to elaborate a bit on a point made earlier regarding the failing credibility of the Mechanism due the lack of transparency on the issue of early releases.

In Rwanda we believe that the purpose of incarceration is to rehabilitate individuals. Therefore, what we are opposed to is not the principle of early release in itself. Let me remind the Council that there is no country on Earth, no jurisdiction, that has to date commuted the sentences of or released early more convicts of genocide than Rwanda has. The problem lies in the lack of transparency and accountability in the process used by the Mechanism to effect those early releases. The problem lies in the criteria that are being used. The problem lies in the lack of consideration of the gravity of the crimes committed. The problem lies in the lack of consideration of the total absence of remorse expressed by those who are benefitting from those early releases. The decisions have been made solely by the Mechanism's President. The Government of Rwanda and the associations of victims and survivors have learned about those decisions in the media.

We continue to wonder what weight was given to the gravity of the crimes committed by those convicts. We continue to wonder what weight was given to their lack of remorse. We continue to wonder what the Mechanism, and particularly those who have made those decisions, think when they themselves hear those released denying their crimes and the genocide against the Tutsi. A number of those who have benefitted from early release have since regrouped and formed an association denying the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and repropagating the genocide ideology. They are free to undertake such criminal activities without fear of consequences because they were released without conditions. That will remain a part of the Mechanism's legacy. The Mechanism and its current President will not be able to escape that legacy.

I would like to point to some of the best practices of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. I will spare the time of the Council and reference its Practice Direction on the Conditional Early Release of Persons Convicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, issued on 1 October 2013. Those best practices provide a robust set of accountability mechanisms that the Residual Mechanism could itself use. We expect and we hope that the Council will be able to advise the Mechanism to consider those best practices.

The first practice is under the eligibility criteria for consideration for conditional early release. The Special Court requires that to be eligible for early release a convict has to prove a "positive contribution to peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone", such as "public acknowledgement of guilt, public support for peace projects, public apology to victims, or victim restitution". The individuals being released by the Mechanism are well known to deny the historical facts for which they were convicted.

The second practice of the Sierra Leone Court is stringent requirements for supervision, restitution to victims, renunciation of ideologies contrary to peace and reconciliation, and proposed areas of resettlement. We believe that such elements are lacking in the Mechanism's process of determining eligibility for early release. Yet they are reasonable accountability mechanisms. There is absolutely nothing extraordinary about requesting accountability, and it is a mechanism

that needs to be put in place to ensure that released convicts do not re-engage in criminal activities.

Thirdly, the Special Court requires that witnesses, victims, the Government of the home State and representatives of requested areas of release are all informed and engaged regarding early releases. In particular, they should have an opportunity to provide their opinion on requests for early releases prior to the Court's decision. As I mentioned earlier, we are happy that for the first time in the six years of the Mechanism we received a request a few weeks ago for the Government's opinion.

Rwanda has shared its concerns in various interactions with the Mechanism, with both the President and the Prosecutor. No change has been made to date to the rules of procedure for early release. We are aware, however, of the constructive attempts by a number of judges and the Prosecutor to amend the current rules with stronger provisions for accountability and obligations of transparency. However, we regret the current paralysis on the matter, as there has yet to be any change.

In conclusion, allow me to submit two very modest suggestions to the Council.

First, the Mechanism should be urged to put in place clear rules of procedure for early releases and to apply them transparently instead of leaving such a grave decision of early release to personal discretion rather than rules. The credibility of the Mechanism and its legacy and contribution to the fight against impunity are at stake.

Secondly, rules of procedures to be put in place should include conditions to prevent genocide convicts benefiting from early releases from engaging in future activities promoting genocide ideology and denial. Again, the rules of procedure of the Special Court of Sierra Leone can serve as best practices. We are not asking for anything to be reinvented. Rather, we are offering those best practices for consideration and implementation.

Let me end my remarks by thanking the President and the Council once again for this opportunity to explain our concerns.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.8279

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 June 2018

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 8279th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 6 June 2018, at 3 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 6 June 2018, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 8279th meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

"The President invited Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Mr. Lacroix.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Lacroix and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

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United Nations S/PV.8280

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8280th meeting

Thursday, 7 June 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Polyanskiy	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Dah
	Equatorial Guinea	Mrs. Mele Colifa
	Ethiopia	Mr. Woldegerima
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Alimzhanov
	Kuwait	Mr. Alahmad
	Netherlands	Ms. Van Baak
	Peru	Mr. Duclos
	Poland	Mr. Mielus
	Sweden	Mr. Nivaeus
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. French

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-17496 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

After consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council welcomes the progress made to date by the Federal Government of Somalia on security sector, economic and political reforms. The Security Council welcomes the peaceful election of a new Speaker of the House of the People and the resumption of the Federal Parliament's activity. The Security Council underscores the need for the Federal Government of Somalia, the Somali Federal Parliament and the federal member states to work together in the interests of all Somalis.

"The Security Council notes with concern recent fighting in the Sool region of northern Somalia. The Security Council urges parties to implement, without delay, their commitment to international partners to an immediate cessation of hostilities, including refraining from statements or actions that may raise tensions, and further urges parties to pull back their forces and engage in dialogue. The Security Council notes with concern that the fighting has exacerbated the humanitarian situation and calls on all parties to allow and facilitate full, safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access.

"The Security Council welcomes the resumption of high-level dialogue between the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states to make further progress on key priorities. These include power- and resource-sharing, the constitutional review, fiscal federalism, preparations for one-person-one-vote elections in 2020/2021, support for regional security forces, and finalizing the justice and corrections federal model, all of which require political agreements that can form the basis for legislation in the Federal Parliament.

"The Security Council reaffirms its respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Somalia. The Security Council notes with concern that internal and external pressures risk undermining Somalia's political unity. The Security Council underscores the importance of working to prevent destabilizing effects of regional crises and disputes from spilling over into Somalia, and the need for all stakeholders, including Somalia's international partners, to work constructively to support the federal system and its institutions and to respect Somalia's peace- and state-building process.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of the full, equal and effective participation of women in the political settlement process and in all efforts towards the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and urges the Federal Government of Somalia and the federal member states to continue to promote increased representation and participation of women at all decision-making levels in Somali institutions.

"The Security Council expresses serious concern at the ongoing threat posed by Al-Shabaab, and reaffirms its support for a comprehensive approach to security in Somalia, consistent with international humanitarian law and international human rights law as applicable and with full respect for the rule of law. The Security Council welcomes recent progress on developing a conditions-based transition plan with clear target dates for the progressive transfer of security responsibilities from the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to the Somali security institutions, as endorsed by the African Union Peace and Security Council on 30 April 2018 and by international partners at the Somalia Security High-Level Meeting in Brussels on 2 May 2018. The Security Council commends the Federal Government of Somalia, together with the federal member states, AMISOM, the police- and troop-contributing countries, and international partners, for their collaborative approach to developing this plan, and calls for its effective implementation, starting with phase one, with the full participation of all relevant stakeholders. The Security Council underlines the need to ensure resourcing for the transition plan.

"The Security Council further recalls the critical importance of accelerating the implementation of

the national security architecture agreement to provide the foundation for a successful transition. The Security Council urges the Federal Government and federal member states to prioritize efforts in this regard, including by integrating and providing federal support to regional forces, as agreed by Somalia's National Security Council. The Security Council calls on international partners to support the transition and the implementation of the architecture, and to coordinate security assistance in line with the existing Comprehensive Approach to Security structures.

"The Security Council notes that AMISOM's role in enabling the transition to Somali-led security will be critical. The Security Council pays tribute to the bravery and sacrifices of AMISOM and its police- and troop-contributing countries to advance peace and stability in Somalia, and looks forward to the recommendations of the fourth African Union-United Nations joint review of AMISOM on how AMISOM should be configured to support the transition.

"The Security Council reiterates the need to enhance the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing for African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council and under the Security Council's authority, consistent with Chapter VIII of the Charter. The Security Council further reiterates its call for new and existing donors to support AMISOM, and reiterates that regional organizations have the responsibility to secure human, financial, logistical and other resources for their organizations. The Security Council welcomes the efforts of the African Union and the United Nations to explore options for AMISOM funding.

"The Security Council notes that accelerating Somalia's economic recovery to support livelihoods and create jobs is an essential component of building peace and stability and supporting sustainable development. The Security Council welcomes the commitment shown by the Federal Government of Somalia to the current International Monetary Fund staff-monitored programme, and welcomes the outcomes of the Somalia round table at the spring meetings on 19 April. The Security Council urges Somalia to continue to demonstrate progress in order to build the fiscal and monetary track-record needed to advance the process towards normalization with international financial institutions and debt relief.

"The Security Council expresses deep concern about the humanitarian situation in Somalia, including the continued risk of famine and the impact of recent flooding. The Security Council welcomes the establishment of a national flood committee by the Somali authorities to help coordinate the response. The Security Council underlines the importance of continued international support to address humanitarian concerns and to build long-term resilience.

"The Security Council expresses concern about all violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights in Somalia, including the continued abduction and use of child soldiers and sexual and gender-based violence.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of the protection of civilians, and calls on all parties to comply immediately with their obligations under international law including under international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

"The Security Council notes that the Somalia Partnership Forum (SPF) will take place in Brussels on 25 and 26 June 2018 and looks forward to further progress on political, security and economic reforms. The Security Council further notes that the SPF will provide an opportunity to advance discussions on resilience and responses to the humanitarian situation. The Security Council will continue to follow progress closely, and reaffirms its support for peace, stability and development in Somalia."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2018/13.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8281

Security Council

Distr.: General
7 June 2018

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 8281st (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 7 June 2018, at 10.24 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 7 June 2018, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 8281st meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

"The President invited Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Atul Khare, Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard briefings by Mr. Lacroix and Mr. Khare.

"Members of the Council, Mr. Lacroix, Mr. Khare and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

18-09336 (E) 070618

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United Nations S/PV.8282

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8282nd meeting
Monday, 11 June 2018, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Nebenzia	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Mr. Miller

Agenda

The situation in Libya

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-17822 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Libya

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Libya to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2018/542, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2420 (2018).

The meeting rose at 3.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.8283

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8283rd meeting

Monday, 11 Jun 2018, 3.10 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Nebenzia	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. French

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2018/530)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

18-17828 (E)

Accessible document

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2018/530)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/530, which contains the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

I now give the floor to Mr. Lacroix.

Mr. Lacroix: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to brief the Council on the special report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2018/530). I will also provide an update on the latest developments in Darfur.

Today's meeting comes as the Mission is finalizing a year-long process of reconfiguration, which saw 11 team sites closed and a shift towards peacekeeping in the Jebel Marra and peacebuilding in the rest of Darfur. As we reflect on the situation on the ground and the needs of the Darfuri population now and in the future, we should consider how the United Nations system as a whole, in partnership with the African Union (AU), can best address those needs. The special report that is before us today points a way forward as we adapt to the changing reality in Darfur.

Let me first turn to the situation on the ground. With the second consecutive dry season without large-scale fighting now behind us, the security situation in Darfur during the reporting period remained stable overall. Fighting between the Government and rebel groups remains confined to parts of the mountainous Jebel Marra area, where the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) maintains a presence. Intermittent clashes that started in March continued, with Government forces putting pressure on SLA/AW strongholds in the Jebel Marra. Offensive attacks by the rebel group were largely limited to ambushes — likely an attempt to obstruct the progress of Government forces. The verification of these incidents has proved challenging owing to access restrictions placed on the Mission and the humanitarian community. The clashes have caused civilian displacements the extent of which is only partially verified. We regret that the fighting has again caused hardship for the civilian population, and we call on the Government to give UNAMID and our humanitarian partners access to protect and assist those affected.

Intercommunal violence remained low, consistent with the previous reporting period, with a marginal increase in the number of incidents. These included confrontations in the area of Graida, South Darfur, where fighting over land ownership between the Fallata and the Misseriya, as well as between the Fallata and Massalit, resulted in deaths and injuries.

Violence against internally displaced persons (IDPs), including attacks on IDP camps and reports of forced evictions, remains a concern. Allegations were received from IDPs in the area of Kass, South Darfur, of harassment by Rapid Support Forces to force them off of public lands and buildings. Confrontations in the Khamsa Dagaig, Ardayba and Jedda IDP camps in Central Darfur between 21 and 23 May resulted in a number of IDPs being killed and injured.

Efforts to reinvigorate the stalled peace process continued, with a meeting between the Government of the Sudan and the non-signatory movements in Berlin on 16 and 17 April to discuss a pre-negotiation framework. While talks stalled over the creation of new and independent implementation mechanisms for a subsequent peace agreement, parties agreed on all other elements of the proposed pre-negotiation framework. For the first time, the non-signatory movements accepted the principle of negotiating on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

The conflict in Darfur has changed, and to best serve the Darfuri people, UNAMID must change with it. The peacekeeping mission should be directed to the area where it is most needed, namely, at the site of continued conflict in the Jebel Marra. In the rest of Darfur, the United Nations system should leverage the capabilities of the agencies, funds and programmes best suited to tackling the problems that remain there. Now is the time to plan for the future of the United Nations and African Union support to Darfur by closely linking the drawdown in peacekeeping to the build-up in peacebuilding and development.

This linkage, between focusing peacekeeping efforts on the one hand and increasing peacebuilding and development capacity on the other, is at the heart of the special report before the Council today. The report presents two central concepts that would work hand in hand over a two-year time frame: first, a peacekeeping concept, which focuses on the most precarious areas where the protection of civilians, humanitarian support and the mediation of local conflict remain a necessity to further the peace process; and secondly, a transition concept, which, in collaboration with the United Nations country team, aims to bridge the transition from peacekeeping to early recovery and development.

Within the peacekeeping concept, UNAMID would focus its activities on three strategic priorities: first, protecting civilians, monitoring human rights and facilitating humanitarian assistance; secondly, mediation between the Government of the Sudan and non-signatory armed movements on the basis of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur; and thirdly, local-level mediation to address intercommunal or other local conflict. The area of operations would be reduced to 13 team sites in the greater Jebel Marra and the mission headquarters would move from El Fasher to Zalingei, Central Darfur. The supercamp in El Fasher would be downsized and continue to serve as a logistics hub, while all other team sites and supercamps outside of the new area of operations would be closed. Overall, the force strength would be reduced from 8,735 to 4,050 military personnel, and the police component would be reduced from 2,500 officers to 1,870.

The whole-of-system transition concept focuses on addressing the critical drivers of conflict and preventing relapse. To operationalize this, four substantive areas have been identified to enable the Government, the United Nations country team, civil society partners, as well as international actors to carefully and responsibly prepare for the Mission's envisaged exit: first, the rule of law, including police; secondly, resilience and livelihoods, including durable solutions for IDPs and host communities; thirdly, immediate service delivery to IDPs; and, fourthly, human rights. UNAMID would support the establishment of joint UNAMID-United Nations country team liaison offices in each Darfur state capital, except Zalingei, with the country team leading work tailored to the needs of each state.

The two linked concepts in the special report provide a road map for whole-of-system support to long-term peace and stability in Darfur. For this to be realized, it is essential that longer-term funding arrangements be in place and that we raise voluntary contributions, use funding from the assessed budget during the transition, and work closely with the Peacebuilding Support Office to access funding. We rely on the support of our partners to bring that vision to life.

The situation in Darfur has changed radically for the better since the height of the conflict, and the needs of the people have changed with it. The special report that is before the Council is a recognition that the international community must adapt its support accordingly. What it proposes is a way to draw on the capabilities of the entire United Nations system, in partnership with the AU, to better tailor our work to the reality on the ground. As the United Nations refocuses its support on Darfur, it will need the committed backing of the Government of the Sudan, the United Nations country team and humanitarian partners, as well as the troop- and police-contributing countries and the members of the Council, to navigate the significant changes. We thank the Council for its continued support as we work to achieve peace and stability for Darfur, and security and development for its people. We believe that, working together, this new approach can help establish a future of United Nations and AU support to Darfur that will help to improve the lives of the Darfuri people now and in the long term.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Lacroix for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): I thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix for his useful briefing, as well as his active and personal involvement together with his African Union (AU) Commission counterpart Ismail Chergui in the review process of the African

Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We thank both the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission for the special report (S/2018/530), which certainly provides us with an analysis of the conflict, highlighting the current security situation and conflict-drivers in Darfur, the political and humanitarian situation, as well as the development needs critical for avoiding a relapse into conflict.

We have all said time and again that the overall security situation in Darfur remains generally stable. Intercommunal violence has decreased significantly and there has been a continuous improvement in humanitarian access across Darfur. That has also been confirmed by the report on the joint strategic review of the African Union and the United Nations. The visit of the AU Peace and Security Council also resulted in similar observations. That is why the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the Secretary-General are arguing that improvements in the overall security situation in Darfur have created the conditions for UNAMID to prepare its exit after over 10 years in the Sudan.

Of course, the root causes of the conflict in Darfur remain largely unaddressed, but UNAMID no longer represents the appropriate tool to address those remaining challenges. The strategic review clearly states that the situation in Darfur can be characterized no longer as an armed conflict between Government forces and non-State actors, but as lawlessness and criminality, aggravated by a protracted humanitarian crisis, problems related to human rights and the lack of development. In that context, the transition from peacekeeping to sustaining peace and the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund, highlighted by the strategic review, is indeed very appropriate.

We believe that there is certainly a need for a paradigm shift in our approach to dealing with the Darfur situation. The Sudanese Government has demonstrated its political will to sustainably address the challenges in the region. It has also exerted many efforts to address the challenges the Sudan as a whole is facing. What is expected from the international community is to intensify efforts in assisting the Government's efforts and to help in relieving the suffering of the people of Darfur.

The American engagement with the Sudan is a case in point, and we are seeing how it has contributed to developments not only in Darfur, but also in other issues of peace and security. But engagement is not the only solution. The Sudan needs immediate and substantial financial support, and I take this opportunity to thank Sweden for taking the lead in changing the approach in that regard. I hope that will be emulated by other partners as well.

The Government is exerting efforts to find a durable solution to the high number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), without which sustainable peace in Darfur cannot be ensured. I am sure we all appreciate the fact that the challenges with regard to IDPs, particularly that of land and providing basic services, are huge and will not be addressed by the efforts of the Government alone. It requires significant assistance from the international community, which, so far, has been very meagre, save for modest assistance from a very few countries.

The Government is also trying to fill the void that could be created by the closure of some of UNAMID's team sites by putting in place law enforcement and rule of law institutions, such as courts and police stations, that address issues related to the security of the communities. Unfortunately, those efforts have been similarly constrained by the lack of capacity and resources. The weapons-collection campaign has contributed considerably to the mitigation of intercommunal violence. That is an effort worth supporting, given its immediate impact on the return of IDPs and their long-term implications for stability in Darfur.

The enormous gains registered in Darfur can be ensured only through sustained financing for the development efforts of the Government. That is why we are asking for a change of approach from the international community towards the Sudan. As the report on the joint strategic review rightly observes,

> "We have invested too much in Darfur over the last decade and a half to risk it backsliding into conflict due to a lack of resources" (*S/2018/530, para. 70*).

It is only through investment in recovery and peacebuilding efforts that we can avert the possibility of conflict relapse in Darfur. We hope that the request from the President of the Republic of the Sudan, expressing his interest in the Sudan's being declared eligible to receive funds from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, will be accepted. The AU Peace and Security Council has also supported that request,

and since members of the Peace and Security Council are coming to New York next month, we hope that they will engage the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission on the matter.

The other important aspect that needs a paradigm shift is the approach to the Darfur peace process. We see no reason for the Council not to have a unified position on Abdul Wahid and his group. He is totally uninterested in any peace process. We have been briefed for quite some time, and have regrettably failed to take any action in that regard. The bottom line is that he should not be allowed to hold the peace process hostage. He should face the appropriate measures for his destructive role.

Although the remaining rebel groups have also not shown any interest in ensuring peace in Darfur, it is a public secret that those groups are engaged in criminal activity in Libya and South Sudan, amassing huge resources. The lack of commitment on the part of the rebel groups definitely emanates from that fact and appropriate pressure must be applied in order to change their calculations. Otherwise, those groups will pose a problem not only to the Sudan, but to the entire region and the larger international community as well. They should not be allowed to benefit from their illegal activities in Libya and South Sudan, using the Darfur peace process as a pretext. If they continue in their refusal to meaningfully participate in the peace process, the Council should deal with them as transnational organized criminal groups, and not as Darfuri rebels.

Finally, we support a whole-of-system approach to Darfur, as jointly recommended by the Secretary-General and the AU Commission Chairperson, as well as to peacekeeping activities in the most precarious areas where the protection of civilians, humanitarian support and mediation of local conflict remain necessities to further the peace process, while also investing substantively in peacebuilding, recovery and development all over Darfur to further the peace process there. We also support the redefined priorities of UNAMID, based on that whole-of-system approach. We hope that it will be taken into account in renewing the mandate of UNAMID.

Finally, we support the extension of the mandate of the Mission for another 12 months, and we look forward to engaging constructively in the upcoming negotiations.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix for the quality of his briefing on the special report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (S/2018/530). The report informs us of the developments and challenges in Darfur to bring peace and stability to the region.

My delegation welcomes the weapons-collection campaign and the gradual redeployment of State power that have led to an improvement in the security situation throughout Darfur. However, it must be noted that the situation remains worrying in Jebel Marra, where armed groups associated with the Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid faction continue to carry out criminal and destabilizing activities. Côte d'Ivoire therefore calls on the international community to do its utmost to halt the actions of those armed groups, which could undermine the gains made in the area of security. Côte d'Ivoire also welcomes the extension of the unilateral ceasefire of hostilities by the Government of the Sudan and certain armed groups, and urges them to commit themselves further by signing a permanent ceasefire — a precondition for a definitive end to the crisis.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, my delegation notes that two major challenges remain, in particular the issue of internally displaced persons and the effects of climate change on the population's resilience capacity. With regard to the issue of internally displaced persons, besides the lack of infrastructure and limited access to basic social services, problems related to land management and the use of natural resources continue to prevent internally displaced persons from returning home freely, safely and with dignity. In that regard, my delegation is of the view that the comprehensive implementation of land management provisions, such as those stipulated in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, will help to bring about a permanent settlement to the land tenure issue.

Côte d'Ivoire encourages the Sudanese Government to redouble its efforts to settle the land management issue. We also call on the international community to provide financial support to the Sudanese Government so as to enable the various committees established in accordance with the Doha Document to continue activities that ensure the well-being of the people of Darfur.

My delegation is concerned about the negative impact of climate change on agriculture and livestock farming, both of which help to improve food security. We call on the international community to meet the funding needs of the 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan for the Sudan.

At the political level, Côte d'Ivoire deplores the fact that some armed groups have not signed the Doha Document, which is having an adverse impact on the peace process in Darfur and on the implementation of the Document's provisions. My country shares the view of the Secretary-General with regard to the importance of making a greater effort to encourage such groups to take part in the peace process, based on the provisions of the Doha Document, which is the only viable path to peace in Darfur.

Côte d'Ivoire congratulates the Sudanese Government on the progress that has led to a considerable improvement in the security situation and improved stability in Darfur, despite the current challenges. My delegation welcomes the progress made on the operational concept of UNAMID, which is focused on peacekeeping in Jebel Marra and on achieving stability and peacebuilding elsewhere in Darfur. It also notes the findings of the strategic review of the Mission conducted with the African Union Commission and calls for the diligent implementation of the Secretary-General's recommendations.

My delegation supports in particular the recommendations on defining common priorities and implementing relevant joint activities, in close cooperation with the United Nations country team within the framework of the transition. In the light of its experience in the area of peacebuilding and the vital support of the United Nations country team in Côte d'Ivoire, my country maintains that such collaboration could provide the right solutions and conditions required to bring about a viable end to the crisis and UNAMID's exit. Its withdrawal should be gradual in order to ensure that the protection of civilians is not jeopardized.

In addition, my delegation underscores the importance of providing the necessary funding to the country team to ensure the long-term implementation of rapid recovery, development and peacebuilding activities. Moreover, Côte d'Ivoire shares the recommendations of the Secretary-General with regard to the importance of reforming the security sector, in accordance with the Doha Document and the principles outlined in the African Union Framework on Security Sector Reform. As the Secretary-General has stated, the implementation of the recommendations will help to stabilize Darfur and bolster post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

Once again, my country calls on the international community to assist the Sudanese Government in its efforts to provide an effective response to development challenges in Darfur, in particular in the areas of health, education and access to basic social services. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire supports the request of the Sudanese Government for financing from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund in order to implement the priorities outlined for the transition period.

In conclusion, my country calls on the Sudanese Government, UNAMID, the United Nations country team, the African Union, as well as all development partners to work together for a lasting return to stability and to prevent renewed conflict in Darfur.

Mr. Esono Mbengono (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix and his entire team for their comprehensive and detailed briefing.

We in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea welcome the positive outcome of the joint efforts of the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations. Their invaluable contribution to the peace process has led to a considerable reduction in the number of clashes between the Sudanese Government and Darfur rebel groups and better protection for the civilian population in Darfur. Such conditions have enabled the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur to prepare to exit the area after more than 10 years of intense conflict. We thank all stakeholders that have contributed to the situation, in particular the Governments of Qatar, Germany and the United States as the main sponsors of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. We invite all parties to the conflict to cease hostilities and adhere to the Doha Document.

Generally, it all points to a security situation that appears to be more stable. We hope that such stability can be sustained with the main aim of restoring peace and fostering direct, earnest and inclusive dialogue. In the light of such progress, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea commends the efforts of the Sudanese Government and urges it to continue to work to restore

normalcy and protect civilians, in particular the most vulnerable.

We would like to underscore the progress made with respect to the confiscation of weapons. Weapons alone do not kill, but let us not fool ourselves — they help considerably. It is therefore important to establish a security sector in accordance with the guidelines set by the African Union Framework on Security Sector Reform. The trafficking and proliferation of small arms and light weapons are key factors contributing to insecurity and instability in the Central African subregion, threatening the present and future of our young people and our ability to build civil, functional and modern societies. It is an issue that affects us directly and we intend to address it during our membership of the Council.

Despite the progress that has been made, it is clear that the process is incomplete and that much remains to be done. That is why we will continue to support and commend the approach adopted by the African Union and the United Nations to coordinate efforts, which we hope will soon result in a positive outcome for the Sudanese people. We would like to underscore that while we commend efforts to develop an exit strategy, we recommend that it be consensus-based, gradual, flexible and realistic, in line with developments on the ground, bearing in mind that the conflict is inter-ethnic in nature and spurred by competition for scarce resources in the area and clashes over lands on which those resources are found. We believe that this is another issue that must be resolved in order to end the conflict. That is why we welcome State efforts in eastern Darfur to establish a mechanism that would determine and formalize land ownership rights through the courts. We would like to see progress in that area.

Lastly, we would like to underscore our concerns about the serious humanitarian situation currently affecting more than 1 million people. Many of the displaced now endure famine exacerbated by the adverse impact of climate change and are in dire need of food assistance. We therefore call on the international community and the Security Council to work together to adopt measures to resolve the horrific situation. We believe that including the situation in Darfur on the agenda of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, as requested by the Government of the Sudan, would be a good way to do so. We intend to support that request during the next annual meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and in the Security Council in July. We will work with our colleagues to address those issues in the upcoming mandate-renewal resolution. As our Ethiopian colleagues stated, we hope the mandate will be extended.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, for his comprehensive briefing on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). We take this opportunity to commend the work that the mission is carrying out on the ground. We welcome the conclusions that the African Union and the United Nations mention in the strategic review with respect to the overall improvement in the security situation in Darfur, which should make it possible to readapt UNAMID and prepare for the withdrawal of the mission in the next two years.

It is clear that the weapons-collection campaign and the deployment of security forces that the Government of the Sudan has conducted in recent years to ensure stability in the area have made it possible to create the necessary conditions for stability. It is vital to continue to cooperate with these initiatives so that peacebuilding activities can be carried out in a sustainable manner. We also must promote the institutional capacity of the security forces as well as the rule of law in the area and make structural adjustments in the security sector that will dovetail with prevention and reconstruction activities following the conflict. We welcome the decision of both the Government and armed groups to unilaterally extend the ceasefire to all areas of operations until 30 June and 6 August, respectively. It is imperative, however, that at this stage steps be taken to ensure that a permanent ceasefire is agreed.

The political situation clearly remains one of the main challenges. We welcome the efforts of the Government to promote the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and stress that the only possible solution to the situation in the area is through a political process that addresses the root causes of the conflict, mainly conflicts over natural resources and land ownership. In this regard, we welcome the initiatives launched by United Nations agencies and programmes and to assess the progress that has been made in terms of land ownership.

We also highlight the fact that efforts must be made to resolve differences on the Doha Document and urge the non-signatory movements to enter into a constructive dialogue with the Government so as to bring about a definitive cessation of hostilities. We reiterate that it is important for the Security Council to consider the measures necessary to bring pressure to bear on those that are undermining the peace process.

However, and despite the progress made in the Sudan, the humanitarian situation there remains a significant challenge. The living conditions of internally displaced persons is extremely concerning, and the cooperation of the international community is urgent in order to ensure the implementation of the humanitarian response plan for the Sudan developed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

With regard to the reconfiguration of UNAMID, we commend the progress that has been made with the successful culmination of phase one and with phase two under way. We are pleased to note that the planned withdrawal of UNAMID from certain sites has not led to negative consequences. We stress the good relations between the Government and UNAMID and urge them to increase their cooperation so that the mission can carry out its work without impediment.

In general terms, we believe that the strategic review of UNAMID accurately reflects the current situation and the short-, medium- and long-term challenges in Darfur. We support the repositioning of the priorities of the mission to focus more closely on support for the political process, which is particularly important, and to promote activities that will prevent conflict from breaking out again and address comprehensively the root causes of the conflict.

Mine-clearance activities, particularly the clearing of explosive remnants of war, are essential to ensure the safe return of internally displaced persons to their homes and ensure the future safety of the mission. It is clear that in order to ensure success in this new phase, funding mechanisms must be created in order to prevent the recurrence of conflict. Here the cooperation of the international community will be vital to promoting sustainable development in Darfur, building the capacities of the country team and ensuring the successful withdrawal of the Hybrid Operation.

Finally, we take this opportunity to express our gratitude to and acknowledge the outstanding work done by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo; UNAMID; the United Nations country team; and the members of African Union High-level Implementation Panel with a view to bringing about sustainable peace and development in Darfur.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting and also to thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Pierre Lacroix for his briefing on the strategic review of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and for the work he is carrying out along with his team.

Although what he has told us indicates that there has been a significant improvement in the security situation in Darfur, we must, however, express our concern at the threats posed by certain militias that remain active to the return of internally displaced persons to their places of origin. The international community must redouble its efforts to address humanitarian needs and to protect the human rights of the more than 2 million internally displaced persons in the Sudan. Specifically, in order to bring about such return and, ultimately, sustainable peace in Darfur, there is a pressing need to build police capacity, promote the rule of law and provide basic services such as water, food and health care. To that end, over and above the achievement of relative stability, there must be a commitment of all parties to the conflict and the broadest possible participation of the population in order to effectively deal with the root causes of the crisis, promote inclusive institutions that are able to resolve disputes and mitigate the threats posed by climate change. We regret that despite the efforts of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, it has still not been possible to reach agreement with the armed groups that are not signatories to the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

We regret also that the Property Claims and Restitution Committee of the Voluntary Return and Resettlement Commission was not able to complete its work because of a lack of funding. We stress that the distribution of land and natural resources, including water, remains the main cause of conflict between communities, particularly since global warming is worsening the situation and leading to increased desertification.

We welcome the fact that the phased withdrawal of UNAMID from its team sites has not led to a reduction in security in those areas. However, it is of concern that there has been a reduction in the capacity to monitor

the humanitarian and human rights situation there. It is also concerning that, as a result of the handover at the team sites to formed police units, the current police strength of only 140 officers is not sufficient to serve the camps and support individual police officers.

Peru supports the proposed substantive investment in peacebuilding, recovery and development in Darfur in order to continue to promote the peace process. We believe that the presence of the African Union and the United Nations must adapt to the current needs of the population. We therefore support the new mission concept, which involves readjusting UNAMID's priorities in order to transition towards withdrawal over a two-year period. In order to achieve this goal, we would like to cite three elements key to building sustainable peace in Darfur, including the return of displaced persons to their places of origin on the basis of a permanent agreement on a cessation of hostilities between the Government and armed groups, the full implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur and financial support from the international community.

First, there must be fluid communication and cooperation between UNAMID and the United Nations country team, with a view to implementing the stabilization and peacebuilding strategy agreed upon by the Council. Secondly, we must ensure local capacity-building and inclusive institutions in order to provide security and judicial services and to promote sustainable development. And finally, progress must be made gradually, assessing the impact on the population of the phased withdrawal of UNAMID. We must avoid a rushed exit, which would undermine the relative stability we have gained. On the other hand, we hope that the withdrawal of the mission reflects the attainment of sustainable peace.

Mr. Tumysh (Kazakhstan): We join others in expressing our appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Lacroix for his comprehensive briefing. My delegation supports the recommendations of the special report (S/2018/530) and would like to make the following observations.

We are encouraged by the continuing improvement in the security situation in Darfur, as well as the overall reduction in intercommunal clashes and criminal activities. The arms collection campaign and the deployment of Government security forces have contributed to the improved security situation. They have consolidated the Government's authority in Darfur and have created acceptable conditions for the exit strategy of African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

However, there is still insufficient progress in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. My delegation welcomes the extension of unilateral ceasefires by the Government and other parties, and underscores the need for a permanent ceasefire agreement to create an environment conducive to peace talks. We call on all parties in Darfur to meaningfully participate in an inclusive political process led by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel and supported by Joint Special Representative Mamabolo. Otherwise, the Security Council will need to consider appropriate measures to increase the pressure on those who undermine the peace process.

With regard to the upcoming extension of UNAMID's mandate, we would like to note the progress in implementing phases one and two of the reconfiguration of UNAMID and the absence of the reported adverse impact of the drawdown. These positive developments allow for UNAMID's further drawdown and its repositioning, which should prioritize support for the peace process. It should also focus on addressing the root causes of conflict, including poverty, lack of basic services, drought and massive harvest failures and on providing a durable solution for internally displaced persons through existing planning documents, including the UNAMID-United Nations country team integrated strategic framework.

Like many others, above all the three African members of the Security Council, we therefore support the proposal for a whole-of-system approach for Darfur with a new concept for UNAMID and a transition clause providing a solution with a two-year frame through four priority areas. Our delegation also supports the idea of developing an action plan based on the provisions of the Doha Document. The success of this concept, aimed at preventing relapse and preparing for the mission's exit, will require a greater investment by the United Nations system delivering as one United Nations. That is necessary in order to streamline operations to meet the greater demand in the light of the personnel and resource constraints. The Government's continued cooperation with the United Nations and the African Union, and its increased efforts aimed at improving the effectiveness of land management, provisions of

access to basic services, ensuring the right of return and restitution of property, as well as increasing the presence of police and rule-of-law institutions in the areas of return are also critical.

Finally, we underscore the importance of the development of a resource-mobilization strategy that will ensure the long-term financial support for sustaining peace in Darfur.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for his valuable briefing on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). I wish to deliver the following remarks.

First, on the situation in Darfur, we welcome the continued security stability in Darfur, as was mentioned by Mr. Lacroix, as well as the positive impact of the weapons collection campaign and the reduction of intercommunal violence, despite some fighting on in the Jebel Marra area where Abdul Wahid Nour militias of the so-called the Sudan Liberation Army are present. We welcome the efforts of the Sudanese Government to ensure security and stability throughout Darfur.

Turning to the rule of law, including security and judicial institutions, it is this area that is most in need of capacity-building for consolidating peace by anchoring justice and human rights. We reaffirm the importance of the support of UNAMID to the local Sudanese capabilities in this area.

Regarding the political process, Kuwait continues to believe that the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remains the cornerstone for discussions with all non-signatory parties. The Doha Document remains decisive in evaluating UNAMID's performance.

Secondly, with respect to the exit strategy, we welcome the contents of the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/530) concerning the exit of UNAMID from Darfur. We would like to see more discussions among the Government of the Sudan, Member States and the Secretariat over the course of this month to set out a new mandate for the exit strategy, in line with the League of Arab States decision taken during its Jerusalem summit in April, which supports UNAMID's exit strategy for Darfur. The next two years will give the Council the opportunity to make UNAMID's mandate better tailored to reflect the needs on the ground, based on the Doha Document.

Turning to support for the Sudan, one common element to be discerned our consideration of the various reports and the Secretariat's briefings is the need to assist that country in meeting its humanitarian needs or to increase financial and moral support for sustaining development there, with the aim of achieving our main goal of sustaining peace.

In conclusion, the State of Kuwait reaffirms its readiness to cooperate with the United Nations and the Sudanese Government and to support their efforts to strengthen stability in Darfur and to tackle the root causes of the conflict so as to ensure that it does not recur.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Elnour (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate your country, Mr. President, on presiding over the Council this month. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Poland, for her wise and effective conduct of the Council's work over the past month.

I thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations for his briefing, as well as the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission for their report (S/2018/530), which is before us today.

It has been a year since the Council adopted resolution 2363 (2017), which announced the start of the implementation of the exit strategy of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) from Darfur and its reconfiguration to conform, qualitatively and quantitatively, with developments on the ground. The situation has been progressing daily in all areas, particularly security and humanitarian. Those were the priorities of the UNAMID mandate.

That progress has been reflected in more than eight successive reports over the past year. They have all underscored the progress achieved in Darfur. A number of the Council's members have also taken note of that fact during their visits to Darfur on various occasions. That proves the authenticity of the resolution and its contents, as set forth in the provisions guiding the

start of UNAMID's exit strategy, while negotiating the decision to extend UNAMID's mandate by the end of this month. I would like to draw the Security Council's attention to the following facts and information.

First, the Government of the Sudan intends to continue all activities to promote lasting peace and stability in Darfur.

Second, we will continue to implement the weapons-collection campaign, which has demonstrated its effectiveness by alleviating tensions and disputes and by stabilizing the security situation in all states of Darfur.

Third, we reaffirm that the issue of internally displaced persons will remain a top priority for the Government of the Sudan in the upcoming period. As the Security Council knows, the projects announced earlier by the Government underpin three elements that require the assistance of the international community in order for us to implement them. They all require vast material and human resources. We look forward to the genuine support of the international community in that regard.

Fourth, we will pursue such exemplary cooperation among the Sudan, the AU and the United Nations, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. We would like to underscore that the Peacebuilding Fund is also engaged in promoting the current peacebuilding phase.

Fifth, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remains the only agreed political framework for addressing the political issue. The Government of the Sudan is therefore striving to implement its provisions on the ground. In cooperation and coordination with the sisterly State of Qatar, the sponsor of the Doha Document, the Government is looking at ways and means to implement the remaining provisions. In addition, we are cooperating with the High-level Independent Panel of the African Union and other partners to include the non-signatories in the peace process. We must emphasize that the international community should pressure the armed groups that have not signed the Doha Document to join the political process.

Sixth, we underscore that the Government of the Sudan will continue to cooperate and coordinate with UNAMID in the upcoming period in order to enable the mission to smoothly fulfil its mandate and carry out its tasks. We will cooperate with the United Nations country team in the Sudan, which, we hope, will receive the necessary financial and human rights support to discharge the duties entrusted to it by UNAMID.

Seventh, we must maintain our efforts to extend the State's control in Darfur and to deploy more police units and rule of law institutions in all five states of Darfur.

The current situation in Darfur speaks for itself. It proves the fact that peace has become tangible throughout Darfur, even in the small pockets under the control of the rebel Abdul Wahid movement. Popular sentiment supports full reconciliation and sustained peace.

The Government of the Sudan is fully aware of the needs in the upcoming period, including the various social cohesion and development programmes, as well as the need to address the root causes of the conflict. We once again emphasize the need for the international community to provide the assistance necessary to implement such programmes by means of direct support or through the various United Nations agencies or its country team in the Sudan. In that regard, we call on donor countries to fulfil their previous pledges and commitments. We would like to thank the Secretary-General for having agreed to provide the necessary support through the Peacebuilding Fund. We also thank friendly and sisterly countries for their ongoing support to our people in Darfur.

We take this opportunity to call for unity and consistency among all mechanisms set up by the Council to help the Sudan to bring about lasting peace in Darfur. The follow-up to the implementation of resolution 1591 (2005) on imposing targeted sanctions must be consistent with the Security Council resolve to restore normality, as provided for in resolution 2363 (2017). In that regard, we propose a reduction in the number of experts and the lifting of the military ban in Darfur. There are two options with regard to the listed individuals, namely, either to delist them from the sanctions list or to list the rebel Abdul Wahid Nour in implementation of the resolution, which warned about his designation on the sanctions list.

The current situation is testament to the importance of empowering the Sudanese armed forces to lead and to have full control of entire Darfur region, thereby filling the gaps left following the withdrawal of UNAMID. That is why it is imperative to lift the arms embargo imposed on Darfur as soon as possible.

In conclusion, we commend the comprehensive and concerted efforts made to conclude the peace process in Darfur. We once again welcome the new peacebuilding era, which will bring development and thus an end to the conflict. My delegation thanks UNAMID for its efforts in various areas, and peacekeepers for their sacrifices over the past years. We would also like to thank the troop- and police-contributing countries. We reiterate our Government's readiness to cooperate with all regional and international partners on UNAMID-related matters until the last of its components leaves my country after having brought about peace and stability in Darfur.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.8284

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8284th meeting
Wednesday, 13 June 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Nebenzia/Mr. Polyanskiy	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Yao Shaojun
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. French

Agenda

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (S/2018/521)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Central African region

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (S/2018/521)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. François Louncény Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, and His Excellency Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi, Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States, to participate in this meeting.

Mr. Allam-Mi is joining this meeting via video tele-conference from Manhasset, New York.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/521 which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.I now give the floor to Mr. Fall.

Mr. Fall (*spoke in French*): The situation in Central Africa has remained difficult since the publication of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/521) that is before the members of the Security Council, with a number of serious threats to political, security and socioeconomic stability, including in countries affected by long-standing armed conflicts, such as the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All 11 member States of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) are either in the middle or at the beginning of an electoral cycle and, as a result, are experiencing tensions related to electoral processes. People everywhere continue to demand better socioeconomic conditions.

Demands for the engagement of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), good offices and preventive diplomacy have remained strong. I have intensified my engagement with countries in the subregion and our support to subregional organizations, including by leading or deploying more missions to redouble our efforts in conflict prevention and crisis management. Allow me to set out some of the new developments in the subregion.

The new Constitution adopted by the National Assembly of Chad was promulgatedon 4 May, and a new Government was sworn in on 10 May. President Idriss Deby Itno presided over a ceremony on 24 May to establish a new national framework for political dialogue, which includes 15 members of the majority and 15 members of the opposition. In coordination with our partners, UNOCA stands ready to support the national framework for political dialogue as it takes up the challenge of promoting inclusive dialogue and creating the conditions for credible and peaceful parliamentary elections in November.

The newly established electoral body in Gabon has begun preparations for the upcoming parliamentary elections. During my meeting with the head of Gabon's central elections body on 18 May, I reiterated the readiness of the United Nations to support the electoral process. In order to improve the representation of women and youth in elected positions and decision-making bodies, UNOCA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the Gabonese network of women senators in organizing a training workshop in Libreville, from 5 to 7 June, which targeted women and youth political leaders.

Burundi's President Pierre Nkurunziza promulgated a new Constitution on 7 June, following the Constitutional Court's validation of the results of the referendum held on 17 May. Several stakeholders and partners expressed concern that reform could reverse the gains of the Arusha Agreement in terms of peace, stability, democracy and inclusive political participation. It is important that the Council continue to lend its support to the mediation process led by the East African Community. I reiterate Special Envoy Michel Kafando's call to the Government and the opposition to resume and conclude the talks as soon as possible and start preparing the ground for inclusive and credible elections in 2020.

The escalation of violence and tension in the north-west and south-west regions of Cameroon, which are also still affected by Boko Haram's activities and the impact of the crisis in the Central African Republic, is a source of major concern. More than 20,000 Cameroonian refugees have already been registered across the border

in Nigeria and are in need of assistance. On 25 May, seven English-speaking activists were sentenced to up to 15 years in prison on terrorism and other charges. The United Nations has consistently called for an inclusive dialogue with all stakeholders as the best way to find a solution to the crisis, respond to the grievances of the English-speaking population and guarantee the territorial integrity of the country and regional stability. I congratulate the national commission for the promotion of bilingualism and multiculturalism for its efforts, and encourage it to continue its work and duly note the public's recommendations. Diffusing tensions will also contribute to the proper holding of the presidential, legislative and municipal elections scheduled for this year. In that regard, the United Nations will continue to call on all actors to refrain from further acts of violence.

A series of trials took place in the Republic of Congo involving political leaders arrested following the 2016 presidential election, resulting in long prison sentences for several of them including 20 years for General Jean-Marie Michel Mokoko, former Chief of Staff of the army and a former presidential candidate. While progress has been made in advancing the peace process in the Pool region, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process is progressing more slowly than expected. The United Nations will continue to support that process with other partners.

Tensions continued to erupt in Sao Tome and Principe following a decision by the majority-controlled National Assembly on 4 May to remove judges from the Supreme Court of Justice because of differences over the Supreme Court's decision to return the country's brewery, Rosema, to an Angolan investor. The National Assembly approved a resolution on 23 May on the appointment of new Supreme Court judges, which was subsequently adopted on 30 May. On the following day, the opposition parties asked the Constitutional Court to review the constitutionality of the law.

The crisis in the Central African Republic continues to have a negative impact on the situation in the subregion, particularly in neighbouring countries, causing a large number of refugees. However, I am encouraged by the findings of the second phase of consultations with armed groups, conducted by the panel of facilitators of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation. I hope that the results of those consultations will lead to tangible improvements in the security situation. I urge the countries of the region to participate more actively in the African Initiative, both politically and financially. I also strongly encourage the Central African authorities and neighbouring countries to accelerate the process of establishing joint commissions, which could address issues such as border control and transhumance. I will continue to focus my efforts on mobilizing support for the African Initiative.

On 11 June, President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea invited all legally registered and unregistered parties, civil society and the diaspora to participate in a national political dialogue scheduled for July. I congratulate the President on his initiative and look forward with great interest to the results of that dialogue, which could further open up political space in the country.

(*spoke in English*)

The scourge of terrorism and violent extremism continues to affect populations of the subregion and to lead to the diversion of Government resources from much-needed development programmes to costly security operations. Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army have not stopped their deadly attacks on civilians, committing egregious human rights abuses and causing countless victims. UNOCA is engaging subregional organizations, including the ECCAS secretariat, the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Multinational Joint Task Force and other stakeholders, to fight Boko Haram and address related issues and, more broadly, violent extremism in the subregion, including to facilitate the implementation of the regional strategy against Boko Haram. I also continue liaising closely with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel, Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, for coordinated support to regional efforts to address the Lake Chad basin crisis.

On 8 and 9 May, the Lake Chad basin governors' forum for regional cooperation on stabilization, peacebuilding and sustainable development held its inaugural meeting in Maiduguri, Nigeria. The governors established the forum as a platform for regional cooperation on stabilization, peacebuilding and sustainable development in the area affected by Boko Haram. The forum, which is supported by UNOCA, the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the Sahel and UNDP, will convene at least once a year.

Violent extremism, ongoing cross-border insecurity and criminal activities are compounded by the flow of

small arms and light weapons throughout the subregion. In response to that challenge, the first conference of States parties to the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly — the Kinshasa Convention — is taking place right now in Yaoundé, with the participation of UNOCA. The Convention was developed through the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa (UNSAC), with UNOCA support.

In its capacity as secretariat of UNSAC, UNOCA supported the holding of the forty-sixth ministerial meeting of the Committee, held in Brazzaville from 29 May to 1 June. The forum provides a unique decision-making platform for discussing the overall political, security and socioeconomic situation in the subregion. The heads and representatives of United Nations peace operations in the subregion — including the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Great Lakes Region and UNOWAS — also attended the meeting, in recognition of the need for promoting cooperation and coherence among United Nations entities on the ground. UNSAC recommended that ECCAS expedite the implementation of the regional strategy on counter-terrorism and the non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa, which was adopted at the forty-first meeting of UNSAC, held in 2015.

I welcome the endorsement, on 24 May, of the regional action plan for the implementation in Central Africa of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, following a two-day workshop organized by ECCAS and UNOCA in Brazzaville. Resource mobilization will be critical to ensuring the successful implementation of the plan. I am convinced that the participation of women and youth will be crucial to ensuring a successful ECCAS and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) joint summit, which is expected to take place in July, under the theme "Peace, security, radicalization and violent extremism within the ECCAS-ECOWAS space." I call upon ECCAS and ECOWAS member States to ensure that women and youth are involved in developing and implementing strategies to prevent violent extremism and terrorism, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions. UNOCA and UNOWAS will continue to support ECCAS and ECOWAS in a coordinated manner.

Consistent with its mandate, UNOCA has remained actively engaged in support of Central African Member States and subregional organizations, in particular ECCAS. At their joint meeting on 11 and 12 May, ECCAS and UNOCA adopted a biennial programme for the period 2018-2019 that includes additional joint visits to the subregion and joint analysis to promote enhanced coordination in conflict prevention and management and peacebuilding. I welcome the decision of ECCAS member States to accelerate the reform of the institution. I call upon ECCAS member States to remain committed to completing that important process. The reform is a good opportunity for the subregional organization to improve its functioning, including that of its funding mechanism, to ensure the implementation of key projects on peace, security, peacebuilding and governance. The United Nations, including through UNOCA, stands ready to provide assistance to ECCAS and Member States in that critical endeavour.

Since its mandate was last renewed, in 2015, UNOCA has proved its effectiveness as a tool for advancing the Secretary-General's prevention agenda in Central Africa. The activities of the Office have also been crucial to strengthening the capacity of ECCAS in enhancing United Nations coordination in the subregion. We look forward to the Security Council's support for UNOCA's mandate-renewal for another three years, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Fall for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Allam-Mi.

Mr. Allam-Mi (*spoke in French*): I am honoured to participate via video-teleconference in today's important meeting to consider the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on Central Africa (S/2018/521). Allow me to thank the Russian presidency of the Security Council for inviting me to speak.

I should like to recall that the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) is one of the eight regional economic communities that make up the pillars of African integration. Founded in 1983, ECCAS is a geographical space covering 6.6 million square kilometres, where more than 160 million people

live. Its goal is to promote and strengthen harmonious cooperation and balanced development across all socioeconomic areas in its 11 member States. Its members are Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Rwanda and São Tomé and Príncipe. That is a major goal with many challenges, which we sincerely hope to overcome with the support of our international partners, in particular the United Nations. Our main priorities are infrastructure, the environment and peace and security-related issues, which did not feature as part of the goals of ECCAS at the time of its establishment. ECCAS was forced to address issues relating to peace and security as it emerged from a period of inertia between 1992 and 1998 because of the violent wars in seven of its 10 member States during that time. ECCAS goals were strengthened in February 1999 with the aim of preventing and resolving conflict through the establishment of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa and with the support of the United Nations, within the framework of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Issues in Central Africa.

In addition to Council for Peace and Security protocols, other legal instruments and normative frameworks were established to provide ECCAS with a robust, diversified and operational peace and security architecture. The Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly is the most recent of those instruments. It was adopted on 30 April 2010 in Kinshasa and entered into force in March 2017. The peace and security architecture of ECCAS works, of course, in line with the African Union Peace and Security Architecture; the results could be improved upon, but they are already encouraging.

Thanks to this architecture, ECCAS has been able to take concrete steps on the ground. It deployed its first peace missions in the Central African Republic, the first and second Missions for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, between 2008 and 2013, with 2,600 staff in 2013, at the height of the crisis, before the African Union and the United Nations took over with the deployment of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic and then the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

Given the continuing threat to the security of the subregion posed by the situation in the country, ECCAS remains seized of the situation in the Central African Republic and continues to express its solidarity with that Member State. In that regard, it participates fully in the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, which requires multifaceted support from the international community.

With regard to maritime safety and security, the Central African subregion now hosts, in Yaoundé, the Interregional Coordination Centre for Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea, which is entrusted with implementing the strategy developed by the States of the Gulf of Guinea, through their regional institutions: ECCAS, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission, with, of course, ongoing support from the United Nations.

The most recent meeting of the high leadership of the three organizations was held on 5 April 2018 to decide on the budget and fine-tune the process for organizing a meeting with contributing third parties, with the technical support of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS).

In the area of combating terrorism in all of its manifestations, and in harmony with the global strategy adopted by the United Nations, ECCAS undertook major initiatives, including the development, with the support of UNOCA, of a subregional strategy on combating terrorism. It was endorsed at the ministerial level and will very soon be submitted to the Heads of State and Government for their approval.

Along those same lines, the long-awaited joint ECCAS-ECOWAS summit on the issue of violent extremism is scheduled to take place on 30 July, with the technical support of UNOCA and UNOWAS. A cooperation framework between ECCAS and ECOWAS is being finalized and should be signed by the heads of both bodies before the summit. I should like to point out here that a document on a strategy to combat transboundary organized crime and mercenary activities is also being developed by ECCAS, in line with the request from the Security Council.

In the institutional area, ECCAS began an in-depth reform, on the basis of a decision by the Heads of State and Government on 25 May 2015. The process should lead to new foundational texts, in particular a revised treaty and other texts. The process is going well; the plan is for draft texts to be provided to us by a study group in July. The adoption and signing of the texts by the Heads of State and Government is likely to take place during a special summit that we are planning to hold at the end of 2018 or early 2019. Within the framework of this reform, it is planned to transform the General Secretariat into a commission and to create a standing peace and security council at ECCAS headquarters.

On the overall political, security and humanitarian situation in Central Africa today, we cannot but acknowledge that despite the many efforts and real advances made in recent years, Central Africa remains a region of crises and armed conflicts, open or latent. It is also particularly affected by the political crises in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and by the political, security and humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic, as well as by the activities of terrorist groups in the Lake Chad basin.

In this regard, I would like to welcome the high-quality report that the Secretary-General presented on the situation in Central Africa. I also am very pleased to see that the contribution made by the ECCAS General Secretariat was largely taken into account in the drafting of the report. Indeed, the excellent cooperation that exists between UNOCA and the ECCAS General Secretariat, as well as my excellent relationship with the Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, my brother Fall, whose presence I welcome at this meeting, have made it possible to carry out jointly activities and missions on the ground.

We have a framework of cooperation that includes plans for periodic common activities. The last such plan was finalized during a common retreat we organized in May. I will not to go into detail on the fourteenth report of the Secretary-General, but I should like to note that certain developments must be taken into account.

In Burundi, President Nkurunziza announced that he would not run for President in 2020. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the International Criminal Court acquitted the former Vice-President, Jean-Pierre Bemba, and in the Central African Republic, there is, on the one hand, reason to be encouraged by the involvement of former heads of Central African States in supporting the African initiative, but, on the other hand, reason to be concerned because of the renewed violence in Bangui and within the country. This is worrying and something that we must act upon, given the seriousness of the situation. In this regard, I reiterate ECCAS's condemnation of all acts of violence, in particular those perpetrated against MINUSCA.

Lastly, the political, security and humanitarian situation in the subregion will be at the very heart of the consultative meeting of the Heads of State and Government of ECCAS, which President Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon and the current Chairman of ECCAS, will convene on the margins of the African Union summit planned for 1 and 2 July in Nouakchott.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Allam-Mi for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council wishing to make statements.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): I wish to thank our briefers today — Ambassador Fall for his report and for his team's work in this challenging region, and Ambassador Allam-Mi for his comments. I welcome him to the Security Council; it is good to see him today, because regional organizations like his are essential, and we are pleased that he has been able to demonstrate today the cooperation between the regional group and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA).

The United Kingdom remains concerned by the security and political situation in Central Africa. Many of those concerns are reflected in the Secretary-General's report (S/2018/521), including the threats from terrorist groups, such as Boko Haram and other groups in the Lake Chad basin and the Lord's Resistance Army in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We note with horror the use of women and girls as suicide bombers by Boko Haram.

As we have discussed on many previous occasions in the Security Council, both military and non-military action is required so as to address such threats. We must understand their root causes and the political, economic and humanitarian needs of the population. It is essential that we adopt a coherent and whole-of-United Nations approach in order both to tackle the existing problems and to prevent further deterioration in the region.

Ten million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in the Lake Chad basin this year. The United Kingdom has committed £300 million to tackling the crisis over the next five years. We call on other international donors to help to make up the funding shortfalls for humanitarian operations across the region.

We are also concerned about the situation in Cameroon and the number of casualties that have resulted among both civilians and the Cameroon security forces. Citizens have the right to peaceful protest. It is the Government's responsibility to protect demonstrators, while also protecting the safety and security of all citizens. We call for all parties to reject violence, pursue dialogue and urgently take action to reduce tensions. Failure to do so will only cause the already concerning situation to deteriorate further.

In that regard, we welcome the New Year announcement by President Biya to pursue dialogue, decentralization and restraint. We strongly encourage the Government to take further steps to give effect to that announcement. We commend the support of UNOCA as part of broader international efforts to find a lasting solution to the current crisis. We would encourage the intensification of those efforts. We ask that we be kept regularly informed on progress.

We recognize the efforts of UNOCA in other areas in the region, including the mobilization of support for the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic with regional partners. We encourage such support to continue. UNOCA also has a crucial role in supporting States in the subregion to hold timely, transparent and inclusive elections and the efforts of the Economic Commission for Africa to lay the groundwork for the structural prevention of election-related violence.

We are concerned about the threat of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, and we appreciate UNOCA reporting on that matter. Further and more detailed reporting on the problem and the work being done to combat it should be carried out given the heightened and significant threat to international shipping and regional prosperity.

In addition to regional Governments, regional organizations, including the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, are essential to addressing the challenges to peace and security, promoting democratic governance and enhancing regional cooperation. Interregional cooperation, particularly on issues such as the Sahel, are also crucial. We welcome the announcement that ECCAS and the Economic Community of West African States will hold a joint summit in July. We encourage UNOCA and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel to continue to support that interregional approach.

UNOCA has demonstrated that it can be a valuable partner to regional Governments and organizations. In order to make the best use of the resources available, UNOCA should focus on building the capacity of regional entities to deliver crisis-prevention work, such as preventative diplomacy, early-warning mechanisms and mediation, and to support United Nations agencies in priority thematic areas, including gender.

The United Kingdom appreciates the efforts of UNOCA in the region. We encourage UNOCA to improve its communication of that good work. That would ensure that those outside the United Nations system can better understand UNOCA's ongoing work and support it wherever possible.

Mr. Esono Mbengono (Equatoral Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank Mr. François Fall, my brother, and the entire team of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) for the detailed and informative briefing on the situation in that region, for which we express our full support. We also welcome Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi, Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States, and thank him for his briefing.

We would like to begin our statement by condemning in the strongest terms the 10 June attack perpetrated against a patrol of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, which resulted in the death of one member of the peacekeeping contingent of Burundi and left another injured. We convey our condolences in that regard.

We take note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/521). We believe that since 2011, the date on which it assumed the functions of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, UNOCA has faced many challenges that undermine peace, security and political stability in our subregion.

As I have said earlier, we support the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa in his decisive role in the prevention and

mitigation of election-related crises and the promotion of inclusive political dialogue and reform processes in several countries of our region.

Today, the international community again faces a new outbreak of Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where there have already been more than 20 deaths. That situation poses new challenges and requires prompt coordination at a time when the international community is focused on the electoral process in the country. We hope that the outbreak can be controlled very soon.

The political and security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic poses challenges to the subregion, which, we believe, should be resolved through direct national dialogue supported by the international community and regional and subregional organizations with measures to strengthen State authority and to alleviate poverty, that is to say, political solutions together with economic measures. At the same time, synergies must be combined to combat negative trends, such as the Lord's Resistance Army. The international community must condemn any neglect of the situation and not allow that group of mercenaries to become more active and operational. In that regard, the African Union continues to call for international assistance to support the forces that are still fighting that armed group, which has taken refuge on the borders of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic.

My country's Government also continues to be concerned about the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. That group of religious fundamentalists has now become a threat not only to the countries of the Lake Chad Basin but to all West Africa. It is also a threat to international peace and security. For more than eight years, after spreading terror in Nigeria, Boko Haram has increased its activities, in many cases using children and young women in suicide attacks, affecting countries of our subregion, such as Cameroon and Chad. It is also necessary to point out that, while the Islamist group has been weakened militarily since 2015 thanks to the joint action of the armies of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and the Niger, today the group has withdrawn to Lake Chad. However, unfortunately, it is still a strong destructive force. The international community must continue to support the efforts of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the African Union in planning future operations against that terrorist group.

We also urge the neighbouring States and other States members of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to ensure regional cooperation to investigate and to combat the criminal networks and armed groups involved in the illegal exploitation and smuggling of natural resources, such as gold, diamonds, poaching and trafficking in species of wild fauna and flora. We hope that the region can soon re-establish itself.

Urgent action by the international community on implementing measures to deal with the humanitarian situation in those countries, as well as with Boko Haram's activities, is essential to ensuring that they can continue to receive aid and enable them to cope with their humanitarian crisis, one of the major consequences of the problems affecting the area.

My Government has taken note of the statement by President Pierre Nkunrunziza of Burundi regarding his decision not to run for office in 2020, despite the fact that the country's Constitution would enable him to run again. Equatorial Guinea would like to take this opportunity to call on the Burundian authorities to consolidate their political process, which will be crucial to the forthcoming elections. We also urge them to resume inclusive dialogue under the auspices of the countries of the region and in the spirit of the Arusha Accords.

While some progress has been made in the region, in general the situation remains volatile owing to a resurgence in violence and the continuing activity and presence of armed groups in the Central African Republic and its neighbours, which are unfortunately undermining State authority and whose effects have a direct impact on neighbouring countries. That was in fact the case with the failed attempt at a coup in my country on 28 December 2017, in which a group of foreign mercenaries infiltrated my country with the aim of using violence to change our constitutional order. That and other similar actions, which do nothing but disturb regional peace, security and stability, have been firmly rejected by the people of Equatorial Guinea, who support respect for constitutional order and the strengthening of their democratic institutions.

This is not the first time that my country has suffered similar attempts, as we have repeatedly pointed out in this Chamber. We realize that our regional mechanisms for preventing conflict should be strengthened. Otherwise we could see even more serious situations

arise that would certainly not help to bring peace to an already very complex region. One possible measure for preventing conflict, as Mr. Fall mentioned, is the conference on the Central African Convention on the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons. We know that trafficking in small arms and light weapons helps to expand and prolong conflicts in the region, and it is therefore an issue that should be given major attention.

This situation of instability and insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea emphasizes the importance of organizing an international conference on combating mercenaries. In that connection, the international community should become increasingly involved in preventing conflicts in the region by cooperating and supporting the efforts of the Gulf of Guinea Commission, essentially by focusing on maritime protection of the Gulf and on preventing and combating crime on the high seas in order to help avoid conflict and maintain peace in the region. Piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is definitely one of my Government's concerns, and in fact there will be an Arria Formula meeting on the subject this afternoon.

We support the continued strengthening of the cooperation framework signed in June 2016 between UNOCA and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). We stress the importance of closely monitoring the tripartite agreement signed on 23 May 2011 in Khartoum by Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan to enhance security in their common border areas, and we urge the main stakeholders — the United Nations, ECCAS, the African Union and the European Union — to redouble their efforts to resolve conflicts, consolidate State authority, protect civilians and arrive at negotiated solutions to the conflicts in the region while maintaining respect for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the countries concerned.

We believe that UNOCA should continue to work hard to create synergies with the purpose of promoting bilateral cooperation among neighbouring countries and strengthening cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in the area of peace and security, particularly the African Union, ECCAS, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Gulf of Guinea Commission. We welcome the announcement of the upcoming summit between ECCAS and the Economic Community of West African States. As a country of the subregion covered by those regional and subregional communities and as a member of the subregional Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, Equatorial Guinea encourages all the Governments and political stakeholders involved to continue to maintain an inclusive internal dialogue with close regional and subregional cooperation, in the understanding that overcoming our challenges in the subregion in particular, and in Africa in general, will enable us to ultimately achieve the goals of the African Union's Agenda 2063.

These and other realities have led my Government to convene our sixth national political dialogue round table at the initiative of His Excellency President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, to be held in July, and to which we have invited all of Equatorial Guinea's political parties, whether legalized or not, as well as all Equatorial Guinean stakeholders and political activists both inside and outside the country. We will use the round table to discuss important issues such as economic prospects, human rights, democratization and the ongoing strengthening of national cohesion as an element that contributes to proactive national progress. These issues mark the guidelines that we have been outlining during our Council membership, defined as the peaceful settlement of conflict through dialogue. We want to reiterate our support to UNOCA once again. It is crucial to the efforts to stabilize our region.

Ms. French (United States): I would like to thank Special Representative Fall and Secretary-General Allam-Mi for their briefings today and for all their work in Central Africa, which is facing a challenging set of political, economic and social issues.

We would like to take this opportunity to focus on the situation in Cameroon, which demands the attention of both the Security Council and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA). We are concerned about the fact that the situation continues to deteriorate, with increasing levels of violence, including against civilians, witnessed in the past few weeks. Recent press reports indicate that as many as 40 people were killed in the north-west region of the country in the last week of May. The stakes in Cameroon are too high for this crisis to continue without being addressed. Cameroon continues to be an essential security partner in the fight against Boko Haram and the Islamic State in West Africa, including as a member of the Multinational Joint Task Force.

The ongoing crisis in the anglophone regions threatens to detract from our mutual security objectives in the region of the Lake Chad basin. If

confidence-building steps leading to a meaningful, broad-based dialogue are not taken now, tensions could increase further, leading to the potential for violence related to the forthcoming elections this autumn, and to the possibility that the legitimacy of the election results could be called into question. We have unfortunately seen far too many examples of tensions spiking in the Central African region during and after electoral processes, and it is clear that we will have to remain vigilant in that regard in the coming months in Cameroon.

While we welcomed President Biya's public commitment to dialogue at the beginning of this year, and while we recognize the initial work of Cameroon's commission for bilingualism and multiculturalism, we are concerned about the fact that there has been little progress to date towards a peaceful resolution. Most of the constitutional reforms of 1996 calling for decentralization, which may have helped to defuse tensions, have so far not been implemented. It is essential that all parties take steps immediately to de-escalate the crisis and protect civilians from harm. In that regard, we believe that Mr. Fall and UNOCA have an important role to play in engaging with all parties in Cameroon in order to encourage constructive engagement, accountability for the allegations of abuse, and a de-escalation of tensions. We look forward in the coming months to further discussions with the Council about the situation in Cameroon.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and we are grateful for the briefings given by Mr. Fall and Mr. Allam-Mi. We welcome the work they carry out under particularly difficult political and security conditions.

We wish to emphasize the importance of adopting regional and subregional approaches to addressing shared challenges, building sustainable peace and responding to the root causes of conflicts, and of the role played by the regional and subregional offices of the United Nations.

The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) is an example in that regard, as it deploys good offices and coordinates and promotes agreement among relevant stakeholders, thereby contributing to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and humanitarian crises affecting over 11 million people, in addition to supporting various efforts and reforms in the development and strengthening of institutions. We commend the coordination and partnerships that UNOCA has established with the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Gulf of Guinea Commission and the Economic Community of West African States.

We look forward to the holding of elections in the five countries of Central Africa. We underscore the importance of political stability and the broad participation of citizens, especially women and young people, in those elections. Promoting inclusive and accountable institutions is essential to building sustainable peace. However, we must express our concern about the ongoing violence and numerous violations of human rights and international humanitarian law observed in the subregion. UNOCA's action should enable the international community to closely monitor the situation and promote prevention. We condemn and are particularly concerned about the ongoing terrorist threat of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin, including attacks on schools and the abuse and exploitation of women and children, as well as the actions of the so-called Lord's Resistance Army in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We welcome the joint strategy, under the auspices of ECCAS, aimed at preventing and combating terrorism, in particular measures to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and other activities linking terrorism to organized crime. The international community must staunchly support these efforts. We also welcome the reform of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa, and stress its complementarity with the counter-terrorism actions of the African Union and its coordination with the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the United Nations system.

We must recall that the subregion is facing a severe humanitarian crisis. Some 11 million people depend heavily on external assistance, and millions are also displaced by hunger and violence. The international community must redouble its efforts to address that vulnerable situation.

In conclusion, I would like to express Peru's support for the extension of the mandate of UNOCA and recognize once again the work it is doing to serve the people of Central Africa and to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Djédjé (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks Mr. François Louncény Fall and Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi for their excellent briefings and assures them of Côte d'Ivoire's support.

We welcome the progress made in recent years in several Central African countries. However, we remain concerned about the serious multifaceted political and security challenges, such as armed conflict, terrorism, poaching, transnational organized crime and maritime piracy.

In the Central African Republic, the renewed violence, including clashes between ethnic and religious communities and repeated attacks against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, continues to be a source of concern. The absence of State authority over a large swath of national territory, mercenary activities and illicit trafficking in natural resources and weapons are all challenges that have a negative impact on the security of the country and the entire region. The situation demands a coordinated response by the international community to address these challenges.

My delegation supports the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, conducted under the auspices of the African Union, whose effective implementation of the road map should enable significant progress to be made towards achieving a lasting solution to the crisis in that country. We also welcome the efforts undertaken by the President of the Central African Republic, Mr. Touadera, to promote constructive dialogue and consultation with a view to ensuring inclusive national reconciliation, which is essential to achieving lasting peace.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, my delegation calls for the effective implementation of the 31 December agreement in order to ensure the holding of elections on 23 December. We welcome the progress that has been accomplished in that area. We further encourage the Congolese Government to do more to address the remaining challenges, in particular security issues, and to take the steps necessary to ease the sociopolitical environment as a precondition for peaceful elections.

With regard to the situation in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire takes note of the results of the referendum on the constitutional review, held on 17 May. We call on all parties to resume inclusive inter-Burundian dialogue, under the auspices of the East African Community and within the framework of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, with a view to definitively overcoming the crisis.

The security situation in the Lake Chad basin is also a source of concern for my delegation in the light of the ongoing threat posed by Boko Haram, whose criminal activities extend to Cameroon, Chad and the Niger. My country welcomes the upcoming implementation of the stabilization strategy for the Lake Chad region, which seeks to identify, prosecute, rehabilitate and reintegrate persons associated with Boko Haram and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, in accordance with resolution 2349 (2017). My delegation also supports the strengthening of support for the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram, in close collaboration with the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2018/521).

Côte d'Ivoire is also concerned about the actions of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which remains a threat to the safety of civilians, despite the fact that its operational capabilities have been reduced. Indeed, the movement regularly carries out kidnappings, looting, extrajudicial executions and sexual assaults, in particular in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My delegation welcomes the extension of the mandate of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA by the African Union until 22 August. We invite the international community to support the military component of the Regional Cooperation Initiative, which remains a relevant mechanism for cooperation and coordination in the fight against the LRA.

The difficulties I have just noted show the need for the establishment of a regional cooperation strategy in order to provide an appropriate response to the challenges undermining Central Africa. In that regard, my country supports the efforts of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to promote peace and security, and welcomes the recent adoption by the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX) of the strategy to prevent and combat terrorism in the region, in accordance with the recommendation of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. Côte d'Ivoire also encourages the implementation of the subregional strategy to combat mercenary activities and transnational organized crime

in Central Africa, as well as the adoption of subregional regulations on pastoralism, as decided by COPAX.

My delegation welcomes the good cooperation that exists between the subregional organizations ECCAS and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), within the framework of shared experiences and mutual support in order to face the challenge of fighting instability. It attaches particular importance to the joint ECCAS-ECOWAS summit on peace, security, radicalization and violent extremism, to be held in July. We hope that the conclusions of the summit will foster interregional synergies in addressing challenges related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, while strengthening the capacities of subregional institutions.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2018/521) provides us with useful insight into the excellent preventive diplomacy tool of UNOCA. Its activities over the past three years have led to considerable progress in the areas of security, peace and stability in Central Africa, including crisis prevention and mitigation, the promotion of dialogue and the implementation of inclusive political reforms, particularly in Chad, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe.

Faced with the challenges of consolidating peace and reviving sustainable development policies in Central Africa, UNOCA plays a vital role in supporting the efforts of the States and peoples of the subregion in their quest for peace, stability and development, especially through partnership strategies with other institutions, with a view to achieving unity of action and pooling working resources. In that context, we should encourage concrete action, such as the cooperation framework between ECCAS and UNOCA, signed on 14 June 2016 in New York. Furthermore, my delegation welcomes the excellent collaboration between UNOCA and the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel in harmonizing the United Nations approach to peace and security in their respective subregions.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire supports the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa. Its mission of good offices and preventive diplomacy remains relevant to the quest for peace, stability and socioeconomic development in the Central African States.

Mr. Tumysh (Kazakhstan): My delegation thanks our briefers, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Fall and the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi, for their informative updates and contributions to our deliberations today. We would like to make our observations and recommendations on some key and salient points.

First, Kazakhstan recognizes the importance of the work of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), in line with the Secretary-General's new agenda for peace, inter alia, in the field of preventive diplomacy and mediation, as well as the support it provides to regional and subregional organizations in achieving durable and long-term peace. We also note, despite the existing problems in the region, the efforts and commitments of the countries of the region to increase subregional integration and ongoing reforms aimed at strengthening the rule of law and good governance.

On the other hand, we are particularly concerned by the tension in the English-speaking regions of Cameroon. We support the efforts of the authorities of Cameroon, as well as UNOCA, the African Union and ECCAS, to address that issue. At the same time, we urge all parties involved to create all necessary conditions for the cessation of violence, and we stress the need to establish genuine and inclusive dialogue, rebuild trust and use confidence-building measures.

Secondly, with respect to the counter-terrorism track, we draw attention to the activities of Boko Haram and other extremist groups and organized crime networks. It is therefore important that the African Union, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the United Nations continue to work towards formulating and implementing a well-coordinated regional strategy to fight the root causes of the crisis, which is of a transnational nature expanding across borders. Simultaneously, if is to be effective and streamlined, the United Nations has to utilize a whole-of-system approach and deliver as one United Nations, with a strengthened security-development nexus for more enduring political and socioeconomic stability.

The regional States are encountering unprecedented challenges in combating terrorism. We support the efforts of UNOCA to coordinate the activities of regional organizations in that regard. We welcome the adoption of the ECCAS strategy to prevent and fight terrorism in Central Africa, developed under the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa. In that vein, we call on all international partners — such as the Multinational Joint Task Force

in the Lake Chad area and the African Union Regional Task Force in the Central African region — to continue to support regional counter-terrorist forces.

Thirdly, the problem of the increasing number of internally displaced persons and refugees in the region deserves special attention. That issue, along with a reduction in humanitarian access due to the lack of security for those in need of help, puts a heavy burden on host communities and countries against the backdrop of limited funding for humanitarian assistance. Moreover, outbreaks of epidemics worsen the situation. In that regard, what is needed is not only the support of international donors, but also the coordinated efforts of local Governments to ensure security and create the conditions for the voluntary return of refugees, with the full support of the United Nations system.

Lastly, we highly appreciate the coordinating role of UNOCA as the secretariat of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa and its invaluable contribution to the maintenance of peace and security in the region. Still, much work remains to be done to consolidate the gains achieved. In that regard, we support the extension of the UNOCA mandate for the next three years.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. François Louncény Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, and Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi, Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), for their informative briefings. We stress the important role that both are playing in the region.

Bolivia commends and acknowledges the work that the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) has been carrying out in the areas of preventive diplomacy, elections assistance, mediation and confidence-building measures, as well as the support it provides to regional and subregional organizations in order to contribute to the reduction of tensions in the region. That work should not be overlooked, but must continue to be deepened with the cooperation of regional and subregional partners under the principle of respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of each of the States where it implements its mandate.

Such efforts must be made to address the remaining challenges in the areas of peace and security, humanitarian assistance and economic development, the complexity of which implies that they must be addressed through a joint strategy between UNOCA, the United Nations country teams and regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU), ECCAS, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community, the Gulf of Guinea Commission and the Lake Chad Basin Commission. It is alongside those organizations that current and emerging threats must be addressed in order to reduce their potential impact on the stability of the subregion.

In that regard, we warmly welcome the consultative meeting of the Heads of State of ECCAS within the framework of the African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, at which they agreed to convene a session of the Assembly of Heads of State of the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa (COPAX). Similarly, we commend the work conducted by the COPAX Council of Ministers at its fifth ordinary session, at which it adopted, inter alia, a strategy to prevent and combat terrorism in Central Africa and another to combat mercenary activities and transnational crime.

We also commend the ECCAS and the Economic Community of West African States on their consultation meeting in Lomé. During that meeting, it was noted that both organizations would organize a summit on peace, security, radicalization and violent extremism in July. We highlight the initiative of President Bongo Odimba, who, in his capacity as ECCAS Chair, visited several countries of the region for discussions on security and regional integration. In that context, we believe that, although the situation is different in each country, conflicts in the region must be resolved through mediation, preventive diplomacy and primarily through constructive and inclusive political dialogue.

In line with previous remarks, we reiterate that we must consider the possibility of replicating the initiative of the Group of Five for the Sahel in Central Africa in order to address security challenges and combat terrorism within an institutional and regional cooperation and coordination framework. In that context, we highlight the progress made by the Multinational Joint Task Force and regional and international partners in their fight against Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin. We also underscore the efforts of the African Union and the Lake Chad Basin Commission, which, with the support of various United Nations entities, resulted in a conference in N'Djamena to develop a coordinated regional approach to find,

bring to trial, rehabilitate and reintegrate individuals affiliated with Boko Haram and Da'esh, in line with resolution 2349 (2017). We believe that in order to address those challenges, countries of the region and the international community as a whole must determine the root causes of such challenges. One cause is the lack of control over the use of natural resources, which are used to finance the illegal activities of groups, such as the Lord's Resistance Army — an armed group that remains a threat to the security of civilians in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We implore the international community to consider the humanitarian situation in the subregion. In the Lake Chad basin region alone, approximately 10 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. Hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons and refugees are vulnerable to food insecurity, diseases, such as Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the lack of basic services. In addition, Bolivia notes that another factor that fosters peacebuilding in the region is the increased participation of women in the decision-making process. We encourage UNOCA to continue its efforts in that regard and in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Lastly, it is necessary and vital to continue to redouble efforts to galvanize political, technical and financial support in order to achieve peace, stability and development in Central Africa. In that regard, support for the work of UNOCA must continue. Its next mandate will focus on preparing for the prevention of elections-related violence and for other preventive diplomacy, peace and security and mediation efforts. We believe it is important to renew its mandate for another three years.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Fall, for his briefing on the activities of his Office and his assessment of key trends with regard to developments in the political and security situation of the Central African region. We recognize the important work carried out by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) in utilizing good offices, preventive diplomacy in mediation, as well as the support it provides to the United Nations and regional and subregional initiatives related to peace and security in the region.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States, Mr. Allam-Mi, for his briefing. We appreciate his work and contribution.

As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/521) mentions, the situation in the Central African region continues to be extremely worrying and therefore requires our utmost attention. Terrorism remains a major concern in the region and is exacerbated by prolonged conflicts, a governance deficit and the weakening of central authority and State institutions. Transnational organized crime that is intimately intertwined with terrorist and armed group activities, such as those of Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army, continue to affect the stability of the region. At this juncture, I would like to condemn in the strongest terms the repeated attacks carried out against peacekeepers who are working under difficult conditions and facing enormous challenges in the region. We express our sympathy in solidarity with the families of the victims of those attacks and we hope that those who perpetrated those heinous acts will be held to account.

The deteriorating political, security, socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic, which also has an adverse impact on the wider region, clearly attests to the fragile situation in the country. It has the potential to reverse the limited gains made recently and plunge the country into another cycle of violence and conflict. While we recognize the various steps taken by the Government to extend State authority, undertaking institutional reforms and the gradual operationalization of the defence and security forces, there is an urgent need to reverse the spiral of violence in various parts of the country by promoting peace and reconciliation. Ensuring broader and more inclusive dialogue, as well as reconciliation among various communities, is important to addressing the challenges faced by the country. We therefore believe that the Government needs greater support to work within the panel of facilitators of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation, which remains the only framework for peace and dialogue in the Central African Republic.

At the centre of the problem in the Central African region is the threat posed by Boko Haram and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). As the report of the Secretary-General states, Boko Haram remains a threat in the Lake Chad basin. Although severely degraded, the Lord's Resistance Army remains active

in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While we were all reminded of the causes of the security vacuum created and the setbacks in fighting the Lord's Resistance Army, we are nonetheless appreciative of the Congolese contingent of the Regional Task Force and its commitment to fighting the LRA on its territory. We believe that enhanced political, diplomatic and operational support is critical for that operation. Similarly, the efforts of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic should be commended. We call upon the Security Council to strengthen its mandate to enable it to respond to the evolving situation on the ground.

With regard to Boko Haram, despite its weakened position, the security and humanitarian damage it continues to inflict on the Lake Chad basin countries has continued. Enhancing political support and mobilizing resources for the Multinational Joint Task Force against Boko Haram is therefore very critical in order to considerably weaken the capability of the terrorist group and continue to successfully dislodge it from its strongholds. All of that makes it very critical that the peace and security of the Central African region be followed up closely, perhaps more than has been the case so far. It is important that the stability of the countries of the region that have maintained peace for a long period of time be upheld. We believe that UNOCA has a major responsibility in this regard, but, of course, it also needs the support of the international community to be able to discharge its responsibilities.

At the same time, we continue to call on all stakeholders to exercise restraint in their activities and to refrain from further acts that could undermine the possibilities for mutual cooperation. Nor should we overlook the recent developments to which the representative of Equatorial Guinea referred, to the effect that the activities of mercenaries have not ceased to be a problem, including in this region.

We believe that the efforts made by the Government and the people of Cameroon towards a peaceful settlement of the challenges they face through an inclusive and meaningful dialogue and national reconciliation should receive the necessary support. Similarly, the international community should give primacy to quiet diplomacy, carefully handling issues such as this one, and we recommend also the use of the good offices of the Secretary-General in that regard and appreciate the initiative that he has already taken. We seriously believe that while preventive measures should always be given primacy, it is equally critical to refrain from dramatizing situations, which might end up aggravating problems. That is why quiet diplomacy is always more productive.

Finally, we wish to reiterate that it is our firm conviction that UNOCA plays a critical role in supporting the various efforts made by the countries of the subregion to reduce tensions in a peaceful manner, through inclusive and authentic dialogue processes. To that end, we strongly support the renewal of UNOCA's mandate. In the light of the many challenges that the Central African region is facing, it appears only logical and proper for the international community to do more to help UNOCA and help address this challenge. We are asking UNOCA to do more; while doing so we should also take the steps necessary to enhance its capacity.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): I, too, would like to start by thanking Special Representative Fall and the Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Ambassador Allam-Mi, for their very useful briefings to the Council today.

As we have heard this morning, the Central African region continues to face a number of challenges. These include electoral processes and related challenges to political space. Underdevelopment and the humanitarian situation in the region are also a source of concern. Taken together, the situation deserves our and the region's continued attention, as it serves as an early warning sign of even greater challenges down the line.

In such circumstances, the role of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) in conflict prevention, including through its good offices and support for regional cooperation and integration, is, of course, of vital importance. Regional offices are one of the most effective operational tools that the United Nations has to prevent conflict. They should be supported, strengthened and multiplied. In this regard, the Council has an important role to play, in particular by standing by our envoys. We would like to express our full support for the efforts of Special Representative Fall and his team in UNOCA today.

Regional organizations such as ECCAS not only play a critical role in promoting integration and development, but also are key to preventing conflict and promoting peace. We therefore encourage continued support for building the capacities of regional organizations in the Central African region. We also

welcome the increased collaboration between ECCAS and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), including the upcoming summit.

We remain deeply concerned by the dire security, human rights and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic and welcome the joint visit undertaken by ECOWAS and the Secretary-General of ECCAS. We also welcome the joint United Nations-African Union visit to the Central African Republic in April. It is important that the United Nations continue to promote and support the African Union and ECCAS-led African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation and the Libreville road map.

We are concerned that the situation in the north-west and south-west regions of Cameroon remains unresolved. The need to address long-standing grievances is evident. In order to move forward peacefully, it is important that all parties act responsibly, refrain from acts of violence and contribute to the upholding of human rights, as well as to an open and inclusive dialogue, not least regarding the question of decentralization. The situation in Cameroon has direct implications for peace in the broader subregion, and we must therefore continue to follow the situation closely, including in the light of the upcoming elections. The continued engagement of the Special Representative will be essential, and he has our full support in those efforts.

Sweden supported the organization of the Lake Chad governors' forum on peacebuilding, prevention, stabilization and regional cooperation, held in Maiduguri in May. That successful meeting was preceded by consultations with more than 1,000 women, men and young people from communities around the lake, including religious groups. This consultation and the forum itself clearly highlighted the need for a holistic, regional approach to address the root causes of the lack of peace and stability in the region, including the adverse effects of climate change.

The main outcome of this process was to establish the governors' forum as a vehicle for recurrent dialogue between the governors of the States affected, aimed at improving coordination and cross-border collaboration. We hope that these and other efforts to follow up on resolution 2349 (2017), on the Lake Chad basin region, will benefit the development of the regional stabilization strategy.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. François Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), and Mr. Ahmad Allam-Mi, Secretary-General of the Economic Community of Central African States, for their comprehensive briefings.

Allow me to focus on three aspects: the political, security and humanitarian situation in the region.

We commend the important work carried out by UNOCA in terms of good offices, mediation and preventive diplomacy as well as in support of the United Nations and regional and subregional initiatives to achieve peace and security in the region.

Nevertheless, the recent developments in Central Africa highlight the volatile nature of the political, security and social situation in the subregion. The root causes of the aforementioned problems in this area require an urgent response, especially by promoting good governance and economic reforms.

Bearing in mind the upcoming elections at various levels planned in several countries of the region, we expect that the Governments of those States will work towards the conduct of timely, inclusive, credible and peaceful electoral processes and will ensure the participation of women and young people.

The unstable situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Central African Republic as well as the recent developments in Cameroon are of particular concern to us. Poland believes that international and regional support for State-building and stabilization in those countries are crucial, not only from their own perspective but also from the perspective of the entire subregion.

While we appreciate the achievements to date, we are still concerned that the Lord's Resistance Army and Boko Haram pose a serious threat to security across significant parts of the region. That demonstrates that international initiatives aimed at combating those organizations require continued support, particularly from the Multinational Joint Task Force and the African Union Regional Task Force.

We condemn all acts of violence committed in the central African region, including the recruitment of children into military ranks and sexual and gender-based violence. The conflicts and the unstable situation in some central African States are the main cause of the

humanitarian crisis in the region. A proper response to the challenges in that regard requires the smooth and comprehensive coordination of all parties engaged in maintaining stability and peace on the ground, as well as a constructive dialogue with the local authorities.

Poland calls for the immediate cessation of all attacks on humanitarian personnel, especially medical staff working in crisis hospitals, and for allowing them full access so as to carry out their mandate and deliver essential aid to the affected people. We fully support the actions undertaken by the United Nations, as well as the European Union. At the same time, Poland recognizes the key role of regional partners and organizations. We commend their efforts to address the challenges to peace and security and to enhance regional cooperation.

In conclusion, we share the reflections contained in the most recent report of the Secretary-General on the activities of UNOCA (S/2018/521). We would again like to express our support for Special Representative Mr. Fall and for the further extension of the mandate of UNOCA.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8285

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8285th meeting

Thursday, 14 June 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Nebenzia	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Lie Cheng
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Elé Ela
	Ethiopia	Mr. Gutulo
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Duclos
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Clay
	United States of America	Mr. Miller

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

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18-18334 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2018/604, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United States of America.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2421 (2018).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mr. Miller (United States of America): We are pleased to join members today to welcome the adoption of resolution 2421 (2018), on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The United States has greatly appreciated the support of the Iraqi Mission and of our fellow Security Council members, as well as the collegial and collaborative manner in which this renewal was negotiated. This renewal marks the first overhaul of the UNAMI mandate since resolution 1770 (2007) was adopted, 11 years ago. It differs from its predecessors in several important ways.

To begin with, Council members decided, on a one-time basis, to extend this year's mandate for a period of 10 months so as to better align mandate renewals with the budget cycle, in keeping with the findings of the UNAMI independent external assessment. It is a seemingly small change but one that will promote better accountability of United Nations funds and a more efficient budget process.

The mandate was also streamlined: the document itself was trimmed down for from nearly seven pages of text to just two, while preserving the core responsibilities and functions of UNAMI at this critical juncture in Iraq's history. However, it is important to know the complexity of the challenges UNAMI and Iraq will face moving forward.

The mandate underscores the importance of supporting Iraq in meeting the needs of all Iraqis, including women, youth and members of religious and ethnic minority groups. That is an area of particular interest to the United States. We expect UNAMI to work more closely with the Government of Iraq to address the unique needs of those groups and individuals, as part and parcel of the broader national- and community-level reconciliation effort needed to be undertaken. In March, Special Representative Jan Kubiš issued a press release that echoed that call:

> "Iraq draws its strength from its cultural and religious diversity and its rich history. This treasure should be protected and nurtured by the Government and the people of Iraq."

We strongly support that call.

We also encourage UNAMI to coordinate closely with other United Nations agencies in Iraq, including the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, to ensure continuity of effort and progress on humanitarian, reconstruction and development efforts at the community, Government and national levels.

Iraq faces diverse challenges, some of which are unrelated to the scourge of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and the path of destruction it left in its wake. The World Bank is already doing great work to help Iraq stabilize its financial footing. As the mandate notes, work also remains to be done on sustainable development and regional cooperation, to include addressing broader water-management issues and mitigating the dust storms that persistently plague Iraq's people.

We recognize the importance of regional and civil society organizations in addressing those challenges.

This morning's mandate renewal is reminder of the constructive role the United Nations can play around the world, especially in the Middle East. We look forward to Iraq continuing to lead the way forward and playing a positive role. We extend our thanks to Special Representative Kubiš and the entire UNAMI team for their continued excellent work.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): The parliamentary elections in May were an important democratic step forward for Iraq. The decision to recount all votes means that the process is not yet at an end and that the United Nations has a central role to play in support of that critical exercise. Once formed, a challenging to-do list awaits the new Government. A strong, well-resourced United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), with the capacity to assist and advise the Government as it works to dress those complex challenges and to be able to provide good offices, is perhaps more relevant than ever.

I would like to thank the Iraqi delegation for the excellent cooperation in the process of drafting resolution 2421 (2018), and the United States, as penholder, for its work on the resolution. We especially appreciate their efforts to streamline and update the text.

There are two areas where we feel that UNAMI's mandate has been particularly strengthened: on the role of women and the situation of children. First, we welcome the inclusion, for the first time, of an operative women and peace and security component in UNAMI's mandate, which brings UNAMI into line with other missions. That will allow the Mission to further enhance its efforts to ensure women's full and meaningful participation in the political process. Secondly, we welcome the inclusion of the issue of strengthening child protection in Iraq, with a focus on the rehabilitation and reintegration of children. Successful reintegration is in the best interests of children, but it is also critical for reconciliation.

The resolution adopted today not only renews but improves and modernizes the mandate of UNAMI. We look forward to its full implementation.

The meeting rose at 10.10 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.8286

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 June 2018

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 8286th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 14 June 2018, at 10.20 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 14 June 2018, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 8286th meeting in private with the troop- and police-contributing countries to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force.

"The President invited Lieutenant General Carlos Humberto Loitey, Military Adviser for Peacekeeping Operations, to participate in the meeting in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Security Council and the troop- and police-contributing countries heard a briefing by Lieutenant General Loitey.

"Members of the Council, Lieutenant General Loitey and representatives of participating contributing countries had an exchange of views."

18-09848 (E) 180618

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United Nations S/PV.8287

Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8287th meeting

Thursday, 14 June 2018, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Nebenzia	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Temenov
	Kuwait	Mr. Bourisly
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. Tachco

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

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18-18346 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Ambassador Joanna Wronecka, Permanent Representative of Poland, in her capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Wronecka.

Ms. Wronecka: In accordance with paragraph 3(a)(iv) of resolution 1591 (2005), I have the honour to brief the Security Council on the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), concerning the Sudan, covering the period from 14 March to 14 June. During this period, the Committee met twice in informal consultations.

At the outset, I would like to recall that following the approval of the nominations of the Sudan Panel of Experts by the Committee, the Secretary-General appointed four members of the Panel of Experts on 14 March, while the fifth expert was appointed by the Secretary-General on 9 May, after three members of the Committee had lifted their holds on the nomination on 2 May.

On 16 January, the Committee received a letter from the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts recommending that the Committee consider updating the list entries of Musa Hilal Abdalla Alnsiem, Adam Yacub Sharif and Jibril Abdulkarim Ibrahim Mayu. On 30 January, the Panel informed the Committee that the proposed amendments to the entry of Adam Yacub Sharif had inadvertently omitted some identifier information and provided the Committee with revised proposed amendments. Accordingly, on 14 March, the Committee approved the revised proposed amendments to the list entries. A corresponding press release and note verbale to all Member States were issued on the same day.

In informal consultations on 12 April, the Committee heard a presentation by the Coordinator of the Panel of Experts on the Panel's programme of work in accordance with the mandate as extended by resolution 2400 (2018) until 12 March 2019. In this connection, Mr. Bifwoli Wanjala told Committee members that the Panel would continue to monitor Darfuri rebel groups, most of whom were now in Libya and South Sudan, and militia groups in the Sudan. The Panel also intended to identify those who impeded the peace process and therefore met the designation criteria.

The ongoing arms collection campaign by the Government of the Sudan and its implications for the arms embargo on Darfur would be another focus area of the Panel during its current mandate. The Panel would also continue to monitor violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, including sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children, as well as the travel ban and the asset freeze. Committee members welcomed the Panel's work and travel plan. A summary of the meeting was made available in a press release issued on 18 April (SC/13305).

Now, let me turn to my visit to the Sudan from 13 to 20 April. The purpose of the visit was to obtain information on the state of implementation of the sanctions measures by opening channels of dialogue to see the precise facts on the ground, towards feeding into the Security Council's review of the sanctions measures on the Sudan. The representative of Kuwait accompanied me from New York and the representatives of China, France, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States joined me in the Sudan from their respective embassies in Khartoum. I was also accompanied by three members of the Panel of Experts and one staff member from the Secretariat.

During our stay in Khartoum and El Fasher, we met with a wide range of Government interlocutors, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the foreign diplomatic corps. We also visited two internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, the Abu Shouk Camp near El Fasher and the Hesahesa Camp near Zalingei, where we interacted directly with IDPs. I would also like to note that I received the full support of the Government of the Sudan and United Nations personnel throughout the visit. In my forthcoming letter to the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations, I will encourage the Government of the Sudan to continue to build on the existing cooperation with the Committee and the Panel of Experts.

On 1 June, the Committee received the first quarterly update of the Panel of Experts, which focused largely on the Panel's visit to the Sudan from 14 April to 7 May. In the update, the Panel also reported that all members of the Panel received single-entry visas for their upcoming mission to the Sudan from 18 June to 7 July.

On 6 June, I submitted my visit report to the Committee, in which I observed that while the situation in Darfur had significantly improved since the imposition of the sanctions regime in 2004, many challenges remained, especially regarding the humanitarian and human rights situation, as well as the political process. Moreover, the root causes of the conflict should be further addressed. After my visit, I believe the Council would be justified in reviewing the sanctions regime.

My report also contained four recommendations — three addressed to the Committee and one to the Council. The Committee discussed the report and its recommendations during its informal consultations yesterday. All three recommendations addressed to the Committee were supported by its members with some additional input, and the Chair will proceed accordingly in consultation with the Committee. The recommendation I have addressed to the Council reads as follows:

> "That the Council pursue its intention, as expressed in paragraph 3 of resolution 2400 (2018), to review the measures on Darfur in light of the evolving situation on the ground. As part of the aforementioned review, the Council could consider setting solution-oriented parameters of the eventual termination of the measures in the long term, which might serve as a vehicle for positive change in the Sudan."

I am sure that the forthcoming reporting of the Panel of Experts will provide Council members with useful information to be taken into account when drafting the next resolution dealing with the Sudan sanctions regime.

The Committee will continue to support the Council in its efforts to facilitate an end to the protracted conflict in the Darfur region of the Sudan and by doing so contribute to peace and stability in a very fragile region of the African continent.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ms. Wronecka for her briefing.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

The meeting rose at 3.15 p.m.